VALLEY VOICE

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Tulare County Prepares for El Niño Flooding

Catherine Doe

The Tulare County Resource Management Agency (RMA) is taking the bull by its horns and preparing for possible major flooding this winter. With the prediction of an El Nino, the RMA is being proactive in preventing the catastrophic damage that could occur in the event of torrential rains in the Central Valley.

According to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) there is a 50% chance of above average rainfall between October 2015 and May 2016. That could mean one inch of rain over the average rainfall, or 20 inches. If the rain is spread out over the winter months there will possibly be no flooding. But if it comes all at once and with unusual intensity, rivers and water channels will overflow their banks flooding surface streets, highways, homes and businesses.

At the October 27 Tulare County Board of Supervisors (TCBOS) meeting, Reed Schenke, Tulare County Project engineer, outlined the details and goals of the RMA's Flood Control Action Plan. The goal of the plan is to protect property and lives. The first step to this goal was to list the "hot spots" in the county where flooding was likely to occur. The RMA pin-pointed the hot spots and then met with irrigation and water districts to coordinate plans and equipment. These districts are already prepared to deal with flooding and are willing to collaborate with the county in the needed areas. They are also the organizations that are ready at 2am if and when issues arise.

Cameron Creek near Rd 148 after being cleaned up. Courtesy/Tulare County

The next step is to clear the dry waterways where debris and trash have collected undisturbed since the drought began. In some locations homeless encampments have been established under bridges, encampments which would block the flow of water in an intense rain storm. In these cases eviction notices need to be issued and their belongings stored.

Before the county can go in and clean these waterways they need written approval from the property owner, or permission from US Fish and Wildlife if the waterway is a streambed. In anticipation of the necessary permit, RMA has already

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Wrongful Termination Suit Filed Against Woodlake Officials

Catherine Doe

On February 15 of this year Daniel Garibay was fired from the Woodlake Police Department after almost three years of commendable service. He was fired based on 12 counts of misconduct, the principal counts being insubordination and "committing acts that brought discredit to the Department."

According to Garibay's lawyers, Sarsfield and Melo, the counts of misconduct stem from an order given by the Woodlake Chief of Police Mike Marquez. Marquez ordered Garibay to stop seeing another Woodlake resident referred to in the case as Jane Doe. Garibay was also told to notify Marquez anytime he had contact with her.

Telling a subordinate with whom you can socialize "is a violation of the First Amendment," said John Sarsfield.

Maggie Melo says there were numerous violations of Garibay's rights and that he was unlawfully dismissed from his job. A suit for wrongful termination was filed with superior court on October 29. The hearing date is set for March 3, 2016.

Melo and Sarsfield allege that Garibay was actually fired in retaliation for his relationship with the wife of a friend of the Woodlake City Manager, Ramon Lara. Lara and Woodlake's Mayor, Rudy Mendoza, responded to the accusations by saying they cannot comment on current litigation.

Named in the suit are Police Chief Mike Marquez, City Manager Ramon Lara, Police Lieutenant Jose Aguayo and Officer Jesus Mendez.

Garibay was hired by the Woodlake Police Department in May, 2012. During his tenure Garibay racked up many honors. He was named Officer of the Year three times, by the Knights of Columbus in 2013, by the Police Officers Association in 2012, and also by the Woodlake City Council in 2013. He received the Mothers Against Drunk Driving award twice for making the most arrests for driving under the influence.

"I was on a roll," Garibay said. "I didn't know I was going to go through this."

Who Sent The Instagram?

It all started in September of 2014 when Jane Doe, an employee of the Woodlake Union School District, received an Instagram on her cell phone saying,

"Shut the **** up u whore go **** Simoni (pseudonym).

And suck up Hanson (pseudonym).

But really did u **** Garybae (sic.)

The message was sent to Jane Doe from a student's phone that had been

WOODLAKE continued on **9 »**

Kaweah Delta Approves $100M Expansion

Dave Adalian

With plans for a new acute-care hospital in downtown Visalia already underway, the Kaweah Delta Health Care District has approved $100 million in additional expansion and upgrades. Included in the long list of construction projects are a new urgent-care facility in northwest Visalia and a doubling of ER beds downtown.

"The short of it is we will be issuing revenue bonds in December for $100 million," said Lindsay Mann, CEO for KDHCD. "The board has already authorized the issue for each of these projects to be funded."

The bond issue will also cover the cost of completing infill of the second, fifth and sixth floors of the hospital's Acequia Wing, the construction of an endoscopy center on the West Campus at Cypress Avenue and Akers Street, refurbishment of the Exeter Health Clinic, a $22-million upgrade to the District's IT system and construction of temporary parking after the demolition of two vacant buildings on the Downtown Campus.

Shortage In the ER

The expansion of Kaweah Delta Medical Center's emergency department "addresses severe shortage of treatment areas" in the ER.

"The project will include new construction and the project will entail 20,600 square feet," said Mann. "We'll add 34 new beds to the 36 we now have. When we're done we'll be a 70-bed ER."

Ten of those new beds will fill an already existing portion of the hospital, while the remaining 24 will be housed in a 12,000-square-foot expansion of the existing ER into the parking lot to the east.

The project carries a price tag of $33 million, and aims to ease congestion in a department that has seen an additional 18,000 visits a year since 2012.

"We now see 93,000 emergency department visits a year," Mann said. "We're one of the busiest."

A design contract will likely be awarded in January, and work will commence in summer of 2017, following state

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A rendering of the new Kings County Courthouse. Courtesy/Kings County

Kings County Closing Avenal, Corcoran Courthouses

Dave Adalian

The Kings County Superior Court will shutter the doors of courthouses in Avenal and Corcoran on December 18. Staff from the two locations will be reassigned to the Hanford Courthouse, and all court business will be conducted there after that date.

The closures, the result of years of funding shortfalls in the state budget, are the latest in a series of cost-saving measures undertaken by court administrators. Line staff at the courts has been reduced by 20%, administrative staff by 29%, and those remaining have been placed on furlough an average of 14 days per year, equivalent to a 5.3% cut in pay. The Lemoore Courthouse was closed in 2012, also a victim of budget cuts.

"We're getting by now," said Jeff Davis, court executive officer. "I would say we're in a stasis position. We've very close to balancing the budget without furloughs."

During the last six years, Kings County Superior Courts have seen a 30% reduction in its funding, and in 2012-13 it faced a $1.3 million deficit. Cost-saving measures by administrators have trimmed nearly $2.5 million in expenses. The austerity, Davis said, is statewide.

"All courts have felt the pain," he said. "We've had our share. It hasn't been easy."

Closures Mean Minimal Disruption

While the closures are "not the path we want

COURTHOUSES continued on **4 »**

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FROM THE PUBLISHER'S DESK

They Just Don't Know They're Dead Yet

And now, apparently, we'll be putting troops on the ground in Syria to combat ISIS. I'm fine with this. As I told my wife a year or so ago, they just don't know they're dead yet.

But--and as would befit a war-weary United States--we don't need to pour in the entire apparatus at our disposal. In conjunction with airpower, special forces will be ranged against ISIS. This makes sense. Think smart bombs and, in their stead, the surgical strike during which we killed Osama Bin Laden. With a carrier group each in the international waters of the Mediterranean Sea and the Persian Gulf, ISIS' bailiwick will be bracketed. We could then rotate special forces in and out for deployments of varying duration and purpose.

Because we can't just do nothing, we can't trust the locals or another power to take successful action, and we can't just throw airpower alone at ISIS. To not deploy special forces in this fashion would make a mockery of our efforts in Afghanistan, where for more than a decade we have been trying to eliminate the Taliban and the conditions that, having allowed it to thrive, proved a breeding ground and haven for the likes of al Qaeda's international terrorism. ISIS is similarly metastasizing and must be checked. How long, I wonder, will it be before ISIS is able to mount some kind of attack distant from its own domain?

The difference here--and why it makes sense--is that, unlike in Afghanistan, this will not in the least smack of nation building.

Now, I'm not much of a hawk; but then, this isn't going to be a war--not if we refrain from using our entire arsenal. It will be pre-emptive self defense. And I don't want to hear that I'm some sort of adherent to the Bush Doctrine.

I want to hear someone ask, "Whatever happened to that al-Baghdadi guy?"

Because special forces have...erased him. Al-Baghdadi, for those of you still unaware, is the leader of ISIS.

Let's be clear: We have been contending with threats from the Middle East since before the founding of our country. With the declaration of our independence we forfeited the protection of Britain's Royal Navy. This lead to the depredation of our commerce by Barbary--North African--pirates in the Mediterranean.

It also lead--at least in part--to the framing of our constitution in 1787 when it became clear that a confederation of states could not in their disunion create a navy to prevent the corsairs' high-seas crime wave. The traditional European response to this piracy was an annual tribute--a bribe. This did not sit well with the American character, however--although there were those who argued that it was less expensive, overall and in the long run, than building ships and maintaining a navy. It took until 1794 for a congressional vote create a navy "adequate for the protection of the commerce of the United States against Algerian corsairs."

Tripoli, nevertheless, declared war on us in 1801. Two years later they captured the USS Philadelphia and its crew of 305, and in 1804 we burned the ship in their harbor. In 1805 President Jefferson arranged for a separate peace with Tripoli, but the region as a whole remained problematic. Maritime tensions with Britain--not to mention the War of 1812--distracted American attention from Barbary, so it was not until 1815, a full decade after Jefferson's peace, that President Madison was able to send a fleet to force Algiers, Tripoli and Tunis to forever cease their piracy.

These things take time, and sometimes other things get in the way.

That's how it's going to be against ISIS. We will be distracted by China, North Korea, Russia and al Qaeda--not to mention Syria's civil war--and there will be those among us who bristle at the thought of sending our troops into Syria for any reason. So be it. I don't foresee this as being a particularly popular operation, initially. But so long as it remains unpopular at home, and so long as we are perceived as distracted abroad, this necessarily small operation will be looked askance at by ISIS. They won't know they're dead yet. And we'll have them right where we want them.

— Joseph Oldenbourg

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Political Fix

Catherine Doe

It's Like Watching Your Favorite Sports Team

"You know, I think Jeb Bush is toast," said Nate Silver, political pollster, after the Republican debate. Besides his debate performances, Gov. Bush's Chief Operating Officer just resigned, or quit, and he has had to cut 40% of his staff.

Is it just me or is everyone shocked how poorly Gov. Bush's performance has been? No one gave Carly Fiorina a chance before her first Republican debate, she was even relegated to the kid's table. And before Gov. Bush's first debate everyone assumed he would be their party's nominee. Now that scenario has flip-flopped and the three most inexperienced candidates lead the field over Governors and senators, with the exception of Senator Marco Rubio who is doing fairly well.

Gov. Bush started to lose my confidence when he did not have a coherent answer to questions about the Iraq War. How could a future president of the United States not be prepared for the very first question out of any reporter's mouth? Then Gov. Bush totally lost me when confronted by a reporter about how Hispanics might take offense to his using the term "anchor baby." Gov. Bush snapped back at the reporter, "Do you have a better term?" I wish the reporter had responded, "No dude. That's your job. You are the one running for president," which he seems to forget on occasion.

Whether or not you wanted to see another Bush run for president, which many Republicans did not, his underwhelming performance has been jaw dropping. It answers many people's question as to how the other party boy, under achieving, unqualified son beat him out to the presidency.

Now with the establishment's preferred Gov. Scott Walker out of the race, they need to start getting serious about their Trump/Carson problem. Sen. Rubio is a decent second choice, but his comments are laugh out loud ridiculous every time he says he is the candidate of the future. His position on social issues and Cuba scream 1950 as he accuses the other candidates of being "out of touch."

The bottom line is Sen. Rubio is not going to be able to hold his own on the debate stage with Ms. Clinton, whereas Gov. Bush is a realistic Republican alternative. Gov. Bush has not performed well in a crowded Republican field. But to his credit, it's hard to be heard when surrounded by a bunch of loose cannons. These fringe candidates complain about the debate moderators' questions, but the questions are symptomatic of the caliber of candidates running for president, not the moderator.

Mitt Romney's campaign strategist, Stuart Stevens, said that candidates are like sport's teams, they are either improving or getting worse, not static. While watching the campaign unfold you should watch for signs that Gov. Bush is improving. If not, then you are probably pulling for a loser.

Big Brother – Where Art Thou? On the Republican Dais

During the last Republican debate the candidates tried to outdo each other with their small government chops. "I want the government to be so small I can barely see it" said Sen. Rand Paul.

I have two words for all those Republicans who claim to be small government – Terri Schiavo.

On February 25, 1990, Terri Schiavo, a young married woman who lived in Florida, fell into a coma and never regained consciousness. She remained in a vegetative state for 10 years when her husband, Michael Schiavo, asked a Florida court if he could remove her feeding tube. He said they had discussed the issue during their marriage and she had expressed that she would never want to be put on life support. The court agreed in February of 2000 that he could have it removed. After three years of legal wrangling with Ms. Schiavo's parents, another judge made his final ruling that the feeding tube was to come out October 15, 2003.

The Governor of Florida in 2003 was Jeb Bush, and he decided to interfere with the state court's ruling. He quickly passed "Terri's Law" in the assembly and senate. On October 20, with Terri's Law in hand, a police-escorted ambulance removed Ms. Schiavo from her hospice in Pinellas Park and took her to a hospital where her feeding tube was reinserted.

Terri's Law was soon ruled unconstitutional by a circuit judge. This came as no surprise to the Florida lawmakers who knew the law was unconstitutional, but passed it anyway. In 2004 the Florida Supreme Court ruled Terri's Law unconstitutional and in 2005 the US Supreme Court refused to hear the case.

By March 18, 2005 the feeding tube was removed again. But Gov. Bush wasn't done. He convinced Congress in Washington, DC to pass a bill allowing Ms. Schiavo's parents to ask the Federal Court to review the case one last time. His brother, President Bush, flew from his vacation home on Air force One at 1am to sign the bill.

The Federal Court looked at the freshly minted bill then said they would not review the case because it was unconstitutional.

Gov. Bush still wasn't done. He ordered the mobilization of the Florida Department of Law Enforcement to be ready to seize Terri Schiavo, if a court order allowed it. But the court order wasn't allowed, because the judges again said no.

On March 31, Ms. Schiavo passed away. But Gov. Bush still wasn't done.

When the autopsy report did not justify his obsession with Ms. Schiavo, he continued his attacks on her husband. Gov. Bush urged the top prosecutor in Pinellas County to pursue a domestic abuse case against Michael Schiavo. When the prosecutor got back to the governor and said that no abuse happened, Gov. Bush finally relented after putting the family through hell for two years.

The autopsy confirmed what the doctors and Mr. Schiavo had been saying for the last five years. Terri Schiavo was in a degenerating vegetative state and had lost half of her cerebral matter. Her cerebral cavity was filling with spinal fluid as her brain slowly disappeared. She

POLITICAL FIX continued on **10 »**

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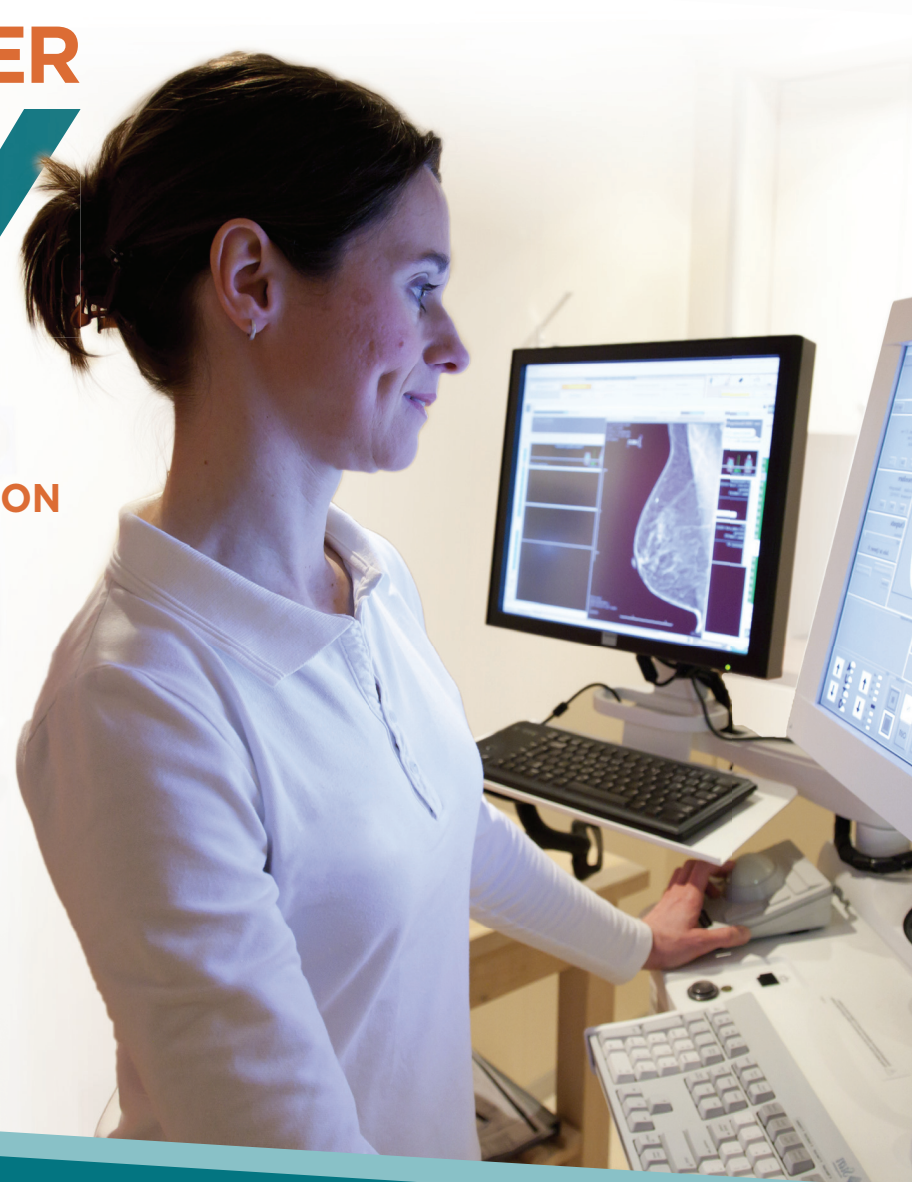

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Cameron Creek near Rd 148 before being cleaned up. Courtesy/Tulare County

County

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written up a five-year agreement with Fish and Wildlife to clear streambeds of debris. Fish and Wildlife uses the permit process to prevent disturbing wildlife or the altering or destruction waterways.

In addition to clearing the water channels, sinking and storm basins need to be cleared of vegetation, and after sitting idle for years, flood pumps need to be brought back on line.

The City of Visalia is also starting its preparations for possible flooding by clearing storm drains and making sand bags available to residents. Visalia's Public Works Department has a self-serve sandbag station located on Cain Street between Goshen and Main Street, just north of the City Corporation Yard. The station is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week. There is a 15 bag limit per person and residents need to bring their own shovel.

Tulare County has sandbags available to the public for self-fill in the event of flooding at the following fire stations: Cutler, Lemon Cove, Three Rivers, Lindsay, Pixley and Doyle Colony Fire Station.

After the presentation, Supervisor Steve Worthley remarked that Tulare County had never been proactive in preparing for flooding but had only acted after the fact. The change in tactics results from the fact that we now have the technology to predict El Ninos and the likelihood of floods.

It has not been that long since the El Nino effect was even discovered, and Schenke pointed out that El Ninos cause more precipitation in Southern California. The rain may not even get this far north. Supervisor Worthley said that in the event that no flood comes this year, at least the county will be prepared for when it does come. He quoted Supervisor Allen Ishida as saying, "every drought ends in flood."

Visalia-Fresno Bus Service to Launch

The City of Visalia invites you to attend a ribbon cutting and unveiling event for Visalia's new V-Line, an affordable and convenient bus service between Visalia and Fresno.

The ceremony takes place Tuesday, November 17, 2015 at 9 a.m. at the Visalia Transit Center just one day before it makes its first official route.

Immediately following the ribbon cutting, Visalia Transit invites the media and the public to hop aboard the shuttle and make the Visalia to Fresno loop. Tipper, the Visalia Rawhide mascot, will be aboard as V-LINE makes its first appearance at Fresno Airport Terminal and Fresno State, where TimeOut, the CSU Fresno mascot, will be there to greet him. The tour is expected to take three hours and a boxed lunch will be served for each guest. Reservations are required to ride.

After years of requests from Central Valley commuters for a transportation service between the valley's two major cities, V-LINE will transport airport travelers, students, and commuters between Fresno and Visalia. Each V-LINE shuttle will feature comfortable seats, free WiFi, USB charging ports, storage racks, and wheelchair accessibility.

Beginning November 18, the V-LINE's first bus will leave at 4 a.m. on weekdays from the Visalia Transit Center, followed by stops at Visalia Municipal Airport, Fresno Yosemite Airport, and Fresno State University before the return route back to Visalia. Full schedule and additional information is available at www.RideVLINE.com

Courthouses

Continued from p. 1

to take," the impact is limited in scope, Davis said.

As it stands, felony cases and misdemeanor cases where the suspect is in custody are already heard in Hanford. Trials in Avenal are limited to traffic cases, minor infractions, out-of-custody misdemeanors and similar cases. Those are only heard one day every other week.

"We're just losing two days a month in terms of court," David said.

Other court business can also be conducted there.

Cases are more varied at the Corcoran Courthouse. Family support matters take up two days a week, one is taken up with pro per cases and one is given over to matters involving the prisons.

"Only on Friday did we have cases like those in Avenal," Davis said.

Tight Finances Force Consolidation

While the timing of the closures was forced by financial necessity, operations at both locations would have eventually been folded into the new courthouse currently under construction in Hanford, Davis said.

"At some point we were going to consolidate," he said.

The closures are needed now, Davis said, so the courts can continue to provide basic services on a daily basis. With the satellite locations closed, staff can be reassigned to Hanford "to offset critical personnel shortages."

Those shortages, of course, are a result of the widespread staff reductions needed to close the budget gap, and have been mostly at the Hanford Courthouse.

"It's borne the brunt of the layoffs," Davis said.

Court Consolidation Has Benefits

Though their hand has been forced, the premature consolidation should actually be beneficial. The new courthouse, now under construction, is scheduled to open on February 16.

"When it does, we'll have 10 courtrooms," Davis said. "That's the equivalent of what we've got now."

By bringing all the court's resources into a single location, its business should be streamlined, Davis hopes.

"We'll be able to provide greater, more timely service," he said.

The new courthouse also offers more modern security.

"It's far more safe for the staff and public," David said.

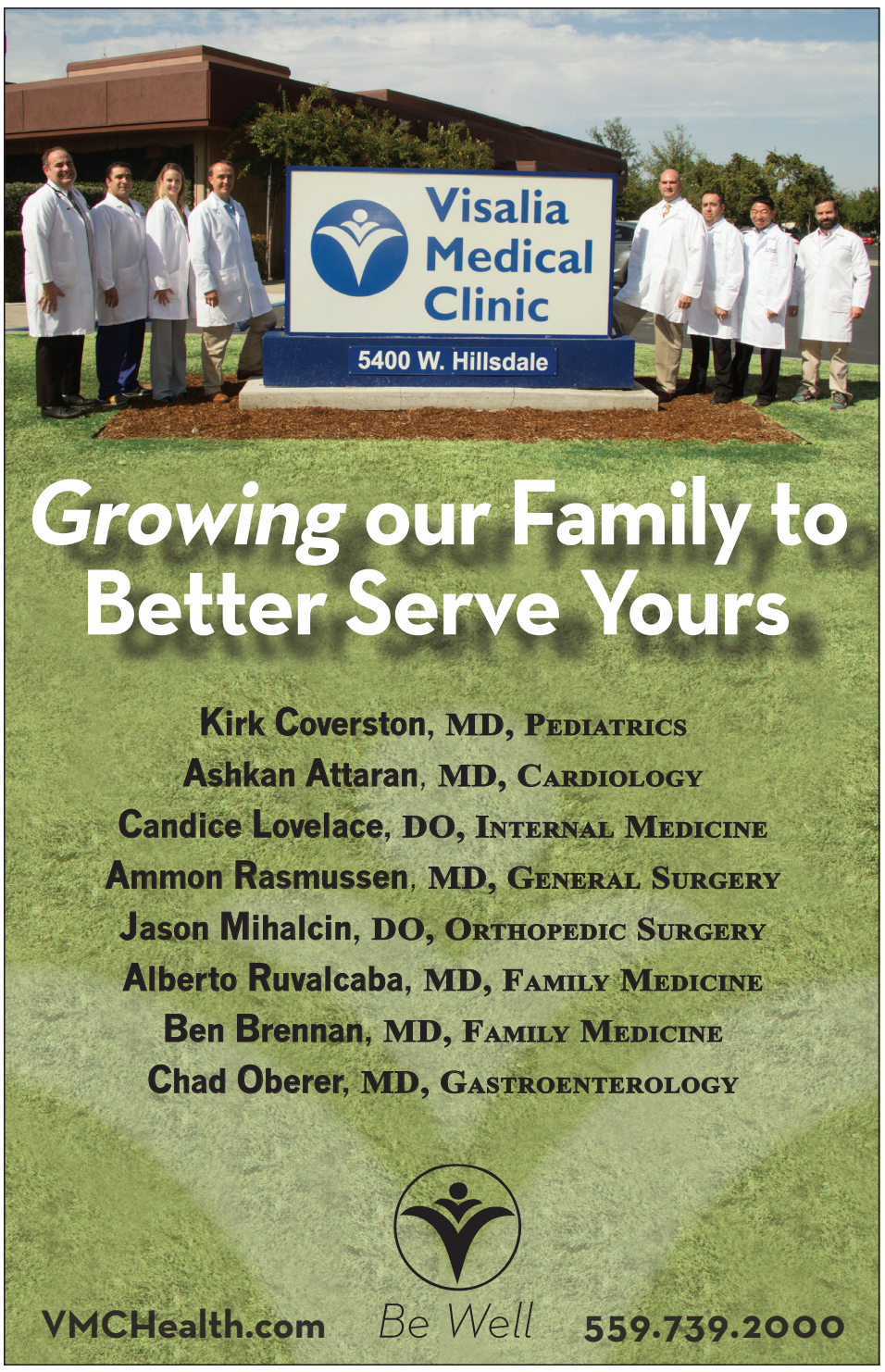
There's also room to grow, with space available for two additional courtrooms to be constructed in the future.

An eighth judge was approved for Kings County in 2007, but the position has yet to be funded.

"There's a lot of ways we could be more responsive if we had the personnel," Davis said.

However, despite the current woes, the courts are prepared for a rosier future.

"We'll be able to continue to grow into that building," David said. "That's down the road. It's a facility that can grow with Kings County."



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Park Advisory Committee Sets Priorities at Second Meeting

Main contention remains Mooney Grove History of Farm Labor and Agriculture Museum used $2,157,050.00 of county funds

Catherine Doe

On October 21, the Park Advisory Commission (PAC) met for the second time at the Government Plaza building. In attendance were six of the seven commissioners and about 10 members of the public who spoke freely throughout the meeting.

In August, Tulare County Supervisors appointed one member from each district to the commission: Chairman Mike Chrisman, Carol Finney, Karol Aure-Flynn, Aaron Gomes, and Vice-chair Nancy Hawkins. In addition to the five appointees, the supervisors appointed the president of the Tulare County Historical Society and the Tulare County Parks manager for a total of seven members. PAC's first meeting was September 15, when it established the by-laws and reviewed the purpose of the committee.

According to the minutes from the first meeting, "The primary objective for the committee is to provide a public forum for input and to provide recommendations on new projects, programs and activities at county parks." In addition, the board of supervisors had just approved a one-time amount of $1 million given to the parks division. The committee will play a large role in determining how this money is spent.

Whereas the PAC was formed to help improve all 10 of Tulare County's parks, Mooney Grove drew the most interest.

John Rodgers, a Visalia resident who has been very vocal about the deterioration of Mooney Grove, started public comment off by pointing out that the chain link fence on the northern corner of Mooney Grove was destroyed Labor Day weekend. He said the fact that the fence has sat broken for six weeks is emblematic of how everything at Mooney Grove is handled and illustrative, in general, of the disrepair of the park.

Two other members of the public vocalized their discontent over the condition of the park. George Golosky, born and raised in Visalia, said that it has been torture watching the park go downhill. He said the koi pond was the centerpiece of the park and that the kids sat for hours and watched the fish. He finished with, "It's just so sad."

Committee Chair Chrisman told the public, "that's why we are here." He expressed throughout the meeting that his goals were the same as the public's, to get the park back to what it used to be. His goal is to be in direct communication with the Board of Supervisors on how to do it. He added, "what we need now, is to do a lot of listening."

John Hess, a senior administrative analyst, explained at the first meeting that the Mooney Grove 20-Year Conceptual Plan is to be the guiding document for the commissioners to use when making decisions. The county paid Kleinfelder, a consulting firm, to make a plan for future development of the park. Rodgers suggested to the committee that they tell the supervisors that "they are not turning one page in that 20-year plan until they get the park brought back to a respectable level."

The exquisitely illustrated plan improves traffic circulation, changes the location of the park entrance, builds walking and bike paths and suggests a water-play feature. It also suggests recreating a turn-of-the -century Main Street with authentic buildings from that era. Rodgers' objections over the PAC using the 20-year plan as their guide is that nothing in the plan can be accomplished if the maintenance crew cannot clean goose poop or fix a picnic table.

Throughout the meeting Rodgers pointed out chronic problems with the park to an attentive PAC. The Chair at one point voiced his frustration with Rodgers because his goal is to move forward. Chrisman said he is more interested in hearing solutions rather than just the problems. One PAC member asked Rodgers why he hadn't said anything before, such as during public comment at a supervisors meeting. Rodgers, though a bit agitated, managed to politely reply that he had been going to the Board of Supervisors meetings for years.

Several members of the PAC are unaware of the history behind fighting for the restoration of Mooney Grove. Starting before the drought, and many years before the recession, the public has been speaking before the BOS of the disrepair and neglect, and beseeched those in charge to do their job. Despite the public's efforts, the condition of the park actually got worse while other parks in Visalia, Tulare and Fresno, facing the same drought and lack of funds, remain well maintained.

Vietnam War Memorial overgrown with weeds and panel missing

The walkway around the pond.

It's Not the Drought

A few of the committee members commented that the condition of Mooney Grove is due to the drought, a lack of funds, or both. Though both are contributing factors, seemingly neither are the root causes. While enquiring the City of Tulare Park Manager on how the City of Tulare keeps Del Lago clean and full of fish, he stated, "Neil Pilegard understands water issues, the problem is not the drought."

Two wells broke down in Mooney Grove a few years ago, before there was a drought, and the issue is just now being addressed. In addition, even though the state mandated an overall 25% cutback in water use for unincorporated areas, Pilegard made the unilateral decision to cut watering in Mooney Grove by 90%--a decision that was supported by the supervisors.

At the January 28, 2014 Tulare County Supervisor meeting, Supervisor Phil Cox said:

"I talked to Neil Pilegard, who is the director of our parks, yesterday and Neil is already working on water savings measures….. He, without having been directed, has already made immediate plans to cut back our water consumption as a county. So starting immediately lawns and planters will receive minimal water and trees will receive the watering they need especially young trees to make sure we maintain them and don't lose them…… We are going to do our part as a county to free up as much water as we can to help out our farmers."

Whereas wells in North Visalia have to go as far down as 1,100 feet, in Mooney Grove water is found at 150 feet as it sits on one of the strongest aquifers in Tulare County. Being a farmer himself, Rodgers observed that, on three sides of Mooney Grove, are well watered, lush, green corn fields. He lamented the fact that the supervisors would be so willing to hardly water a public park used by thousands of Valley residents, many of them low income, for the benefit of private enterprise. Pilegard said during the PAC meeting that 40 trees have had to be cut down and 20 of them were oaks. A final count of all the dead and dying trees will not be known until next spring.

It's Not the Recession

In 2008, during a public workshop concerning the Tulare County History of Farm Labor and Agriculture Museum, RMA said that the county was poised to receive a huge state grant and they did not want to lose it. The grant for the new museum was to provide $1.7 million, and Rodgers was told that the county would have to contribute an additional $1.3 million. Later, Rogers was told those numbers were not correct, but after repeated requests he was not provided with the updated numbers.

The Valley Voice was recently informed by a Tulare County spokesperson that the new museum cost a total of $3,608,920. Of that amount, the county paid $2,157,050, $1 million more than what Rodgers was told in 2009. The remaining cost of construction, $1,451,870, was paid for through a combination of funds received by the Tulare County Historical Society from the State of California.

Rogers felt the county ram-rodded the grant through the system without being completely honest about how much it would cost the taxpayers. He testified during the public hearing for the farm labor and agriculture museum in 2008 that Mooney Grove had been suffering from years of deferred maintenance and neglect. He predicted that the museum would siphon off resources from the park and make the situation worse. His predictions were correct.

In addition to the cost of the museum, the county paid Kleinfelder $196,910 for the preparation and completion of the 20-Year Master Plan. The maintenance costs for both the new museum and the older historical museum was $20,446 for Fiscal Year 2014/15.

Whether or not the new museum siphoned off money from the park, $2.3 million dollars would have gone a long way toward maintaining Mooney Grove.

Moving Forward

The meeting lasted two hours and covered a lot of territory such as the condition of the wells, dealing with the geese, and an explanation of the pond's role in irrigation. At every juncture public input or questions were encouraged and constructive discussions ensued. The committee told Rodgers that he was preaching to the choir and that they wanted the same things he did, which was a restored park.

The next Park Advisory Meeting will be Tuesday, November 10 at 3pm at the Government Plaza Building. The commissioners agreed to continue discussion on the maintenance of the park including the lake, koi pond, wells, and geese. Hess agreed to do some research on the other Valley parks that are in better shape, such as Del Lago, and present his findings at the next meeting.

Agriculture

Farmers Prepare for the Possibility of El Niño storms

Christine Souza, CFBF

Heavy downpours, potentially catastrophic flooding, mudslides, debris flows: Forecasters have begun issuing predictions about the possible impact in California from storms generated by the El Niño condition brewing in the tropical Pacific Ocean. Farmers around the state who have endured four years of drought say they're now preparing for how an El Niño winter might affect their land.

Almond grower Dan Cummings of Chico said he's begun planning for potentially strong storms.

"We've been having meetings about all of the preparations we're going to do to be ready: working on drains, some mechanical topping of trees and certainly applying zinc sulfate to get the leaves off of the tree early," he said.

Cummings recalled losing 25,000 almond trees in one day in 2008, which blew over as a result of high winds and saturated soil.

"It's worse than you can imagine, because it is not one 250-acre block that you can pull out and start over. It was 6 or 8 percent of the trees spread evenly throughout all of the orchards," Cummings said.

California State Climatologist Michael Anderson said the predicted conditions in the tropical Pacific place the current El Niño as "one of the strongest events that we've seen," and could produce a series of storms every three to five days beginning in December. For other events "as big as this," he reached back to the water years 1983 and 1998.

"In '83, the water year started out wet, stayed wet all of the way through May and is our wettest year on record. In '98, it actually didn't kick in until after the New Year. But when it did, it was very wet and ended up being one of our wetter years," Anderson said.

Parts of Southern California could be hit particularly hard by El Niño storms, he said, noting the potential for mudflows on steep slopes. To prepare, Anderson said, landowners need to pay attention to local conditions.

"Make preparations as you would for a possible wet winter and storm impacts. Sometimes, if you've been through some dry years, you let some things slide, but this would be a good year to try and tend to as much as you can," he said.

Farmer Mike Richardson of Fillmore, who operates Quality Ag Inc., which specializes in ranch management, construction projects, irrigation installation and earthwork, said he has been busy the past few weeks helping farmers prepare properties for winter.

"We've been doing a lot of work either cleaning up ditches and retention ponds or installing drain line systems," Richardson said. "Projects that we have done over the past few months are so that people are really prepared."

Richardson's company is working for one farm owner in Santa Barbara County to regrade roads so that water stays on one side of the road and travels into drainage ditches that are being installed, as opposed to running free.

Other work in Ventura County includes clearing overgrown shrubs and brush in natural drainage ditches and clearing leaves from drainage lines. In Richardson's own avocado and lemon orchards, he said, he is planting a cover crop to help with erosion control and to add nitrogen to the soil.

"We are doing a little bit extra than what we would normally do, such as making the berm a little higher and touching up slopes to make sure that water goes where it is supposed to," Richardson said.

Steve Mello, a diversified farmer from Sacramento County, farms on Tyler Island in the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta and serves as president of Reclamation District No. 563. Like other farmers in the district, he is assessed about $55 per acre for flood control and levee maintenance projects.

"When you live below sea level, you remain forever diligent. This is our livelihood. If the island floods, we would be in dire economic straits," said Mello, also a director for the California Central Valley Flood Control Association.

Mello and his fellow delta farmers fund a variety of projects, including improving levees by raising and stabilizing them with rock revetments, as well as replacing failing pipes. With El Niño approaching, the district continues this work and is using excavators to clean district canals.

"I just got off of the phone from ordering 5,000 sandbags," Mello said, calling that a typical seasonal supply. "The district over the years has undertaken several different projects to raise our levee, and so we feel we are much safer from flood than we have been. But there's still work to do."

To prepare for storms generated by El Niño, Alonso Arrelano of Quality Ag Inc. clears dirt and leaves from a drain at an avocado grove in Fillmore. Photo courtesy Carlos Chavez/CFBF

Mello suggested that farmers should make sure that ditches are clean and free of debris, that their crops are insured to a level that is cost effective, that any drainage systems that carry excess rainfall are in good shape, and that pumps are inspected.

While preparations continue for what could be an unusally wet year, Anderson said he is trying to determine if the El Niño conditions will also lead to a plentiful snowpack.

"Oftentimes, El Niño tends to be favorable for snowpack development; it has in the past. We won't really know that until we get closer to winter," he said. "Then, the big challenge is figuring out how much rain is on the landscape and how much goes into groundwater recharge."

San Luis Obispo County vegetable farmer Tom Ikeda said he is hopeful about the predicted El Niño storms, but added that after four years of drought, he is "somewhat skeptical."

"Even when they are calling for a huge El Niño and a wet winter, we are cautiously optimistic. We are planning for a wet year as well as another dry year. You've got to try to plan for both and hope for the best," he said.

To learn more about flood risk, see the California Department of Water Resources website at www.water.ca.gov/floodsafe/ca-flood-preparedness/fpw_home.cfm

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(Christine Souza is an assistant editor of Ag Alert. She may be contacted at csouza@cfbf.com.)

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Agriculture

Groundwater: Deadlines Loom as New State Law Goes Into Effect

Kate Campbell , CFBF

Hammering out the structure for sustainably managing groundwater is a complicated effort, California water experts say. But farm owners, water districts, government agencies and cities all have a stake in completing the steps to meet the deadlines set by the 2014 Sustainable Groundwater Management Act.

Known as SGMA, the law sets a number of milestones that must be met to achieve groundwater sustainability. People involved in implementing the law say achieving that means acting now to complete incremental steps to sustainability.

Some of the most pressing and problematic deadlines are just months away, said Sonoma County farmer Tito Sasaki, who serves on both the California Farm Bureau Federation and Sonoma County Farm Bureau water committees.

Sasaki said attending groundwater sustainability meetings, briefings and planning sessions related to SGMA has turned into a near full-time job for him—and that's in a county where groundwater management has been a priority for more than a decade.

"Our county is moving ahead as scheduled and will definitely meet deadlines for establishing the required groundwater sustainability agencies for at least two of our three groundwater basins," Sasaki said, adding that the Sonoma County Farm Bureau has held discussions and a workshop with agricultural landowners to help them prepare for upcoming decisions and deadlines.

Of immediate concern, he said, is the June 30, 2017, deadline for establishing groundwater sustainability agencies, or GSAs. In Sonoma County, there are 11 local entities eligible to oversee future groundwater use, and decisions need to be made about how governance—structure, scope, accountability—will be handled within the SGMA framework.

"Agency people in our county have been working on this for six months, and everyone agrees there should be one overall plan coordinated at the county level and three groundwater sustainability plans—one for each aquifer," Sasaki said. "Each GSA will take seats on the county-level governing board."

Getting to that level of agreement has been complicated, he said, because of the need to address the interests of many stakeholders.

"How these groundwater agencies are set up and operate will shape the future of agriculture for a long time," CFBF Associate Counsel Jack Rice said. "The challenges for agriculture in this process are significant, both because groundwater is technically and legally complicated, and because managing groundwater can mean limiting how much is pumped."

The task of setting up GSAs becomes more complex when looking at governance and boundaries for all underground aquifers statewide. There are currently 431 groundwater basins, underlying about 40 percent of the surface area of California. A number of the basins are subdivided into sub-basins, totaling 515 distinct groundwater systems. Many of the sub-basin boundaries, however, are not precise, meaning additional studies are needed, according to the state Department of Water Resources.

Basins have been tentatively ranked, with 127 identified as medium to high priority, including 21 designated critically overdrafted.

The California Water Commission adopted new groundwater-basin boundary regulations to allow for basin modifications in the future. DWR said it will begin accepting requests from local agencies for basin boundary modifications as early as Jan. 1.

The California Water Foundation has been working with stakeholders during the past year to support local SGMA implementation, said Kate Williams, foundation program manager.

"What we understand is that agricultural communities in some parts of the state are still trying to decide how to represent their interests, particularly if they're not part of an irrigation district," she said.

But Williams said she thinks SGMA implementation is going well overall, adding "that doesn't mean there haven't been bumps, but it's such a huge shift in the paradigm of water management. It's a big challenge."

At the Association of California Water Agencies, Dave Bolland called SGMA "one of the most important changes in California water law in probably 100 years."

"We're optimistic about the focus on local groundwater water management and the importance of planning at a local basin level," he said.

Once sustainability regulations are set, Bolland said, he expects a lot of action at the local groundwater-basin level in terms of planning for sustainability, including more involvement by groundwater users, including farmers and ranchers.

"We're facing some regulatory deadlines," Bolland said. "The next big action coming up is forming the GSAs, and it's going to be important for groundwater users to engage with their local agencies to make sure their interests are represented in the implementation process."

CFBF Water Resources Director Danny Merkley said there's a significant incentive for local agencies to meet SGMA regulatory deadlines.

"If you don't meet your GSA formation deadlines, the state water board has the authority to become your GSA," Merkley said. "They'll develop your sustainability plan, and that might not be the best approach."

Merkley said governance issues need to be addressed at the local level, and that's where an area's agricultural leaders can play a role in bringing water users together to help create the foundation and framework for sustainable groundwater use.

That won't be easy, he cautioned.

"There are counties that have been working on groundwater management for decades, and even they are having challenges in setting up their GSAs," Merkley said.

"Many of the things to be decided are controversial," he said. "The best way to mitigate these risks to our agricultural livelihoods is to get involved."

Information about the new sustainable groundwater rules is available at www.water.ca.gov/groundwater/index.cfm.

(Kate Campbell is an assistant editor of Ag Alert. She may be contacted at kcampbell@cfbf.com.)

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Tulare County Walnut Buying Period Starts Nov. 1

Tulare County Agricultural Commissioner Kinoshita announced the walnut-buying period will begin November 1st as the County's nut theft ordinance continues to be enforced.

"Commercial production and handling of walnuts constitute an important industry here in Tulare County" Kinoshita said. "Unfortunately, some people steal them from orchards and attempt to sell the walnuts illegally on the streets."

Walnuts are typically shaken from the trees and left unattended until workers can gather them up, making them prime targets for overnight heists.

One amendment to the ordinance mandates that walnut-buying stands shall not operate within the boundaries of Tulare County until a "Walnut Buying Period", as established by the Agricultural Commissioner, is in effect. Kinoshita said that consensus was reached amongst walnut growers to determine the appropriate start date.

Tachi Palace Celebrates 32 Years

Tachi Palace Hotel and Casino will be celebrating its 32 anniversary.

In 1983, what is now known as Tachi Palace Hotel and Casino opened its doors for the first time as the 1,100-seat Southgate Bingo Hall. It was an immediate success, and with upgrades a few years later, it became known as one of the most luxurious bingo halls in the state under the joint ownership of the Tachi-Yokut Tribe and British-American Bingo, Inc.

By 1994, the Tachi-Yokut tribe had taken over full operation and began further expanding the facility to include slot machines and other gaming, as well as assuming the name Palace Indian Gaming Center. More than a decade later in 2005, a major expansion occurred, and the center was renamed Tachi Palace, taking the tribe's name for the first time.

The following year construction began on a seven-story, 255-room hotel. The present name, Tachi Palace Hotel and Casino, was officially adopted when the hotel opened in November, 2007. Today, the casino offers a multitude of gaming, modern high-quality accommodations, on-site wedding arrangements, spacious convention facilities, and a variety of restaurants.

The Casino of the Sun, decorated with brilliant sun themes across 80,000 square feet of gaming space, offers a vibrant atmosphere for players. Meanwhile, the Casino of the Moon with 60,000 square feet of gaming space, has a more relaxed atmosphere. The casino hosts a tournament each year to send players to the World Series of Poker in Las Vegas.

On October 29, the City of Visalia Animal Care Center celebrated its grand opening with a ribbon cutting, facility tours and reception at 29016 Highway 99. Learn all about the functions of the 17,000 square foot Animal Care Center, the importance of spay and neutering for pets and receive important information on licensing and microchipping your furry friends. For more information on the Visalia Animal Care Center, visit them online.

$1000 Ruiz 4 Kids Grant Awarded to Dinuba Elementary School

Ruiz 4 Kids recently awarded Kennedy Elementary teacher Corrina Archuleta with an $1000 grant to assist with the teaching of reading and writing standards for Transitional Kindergarten. It is her goal with the books and additional materials that they will provide a hands-on approach to learning, which will engage her students so they will be more prepared for the challenges of the second year of the two-year kindergarten program.

"I am so happy that I took advantage of The Ruiz 4 Kids Teacher Grant that is giving back to the local community schools and providing learning materials for our students that may not have otherwise been purchased. Being a recipient of $1000 for the 2015-2016 school year has provided new ELA and Math resources that will be used daily to create new learning experiences for my 14 Transitional Kindergarten students at Kennedy Elementary and future TK students. Thank you, Ruiz Foods!," said Archuleta.

"Ensuring that students are provided the adequate tools to help achieve their educational needs is the main purpose for the Ruiz 4 Kids Mini Teacher Grants," said Blanca Santana Ruiz 4 Kids, Dinuba. "We look forward to seeing students in the Dinuba community benefit with our support."

City Appoints New Community Development Director

On November 2, Nicholas D. (Nick) Mascia was named City of Visalia's new Community Development director. Mascia has 18 years of experience in the engineering, traffic safety and community development fields. City Manager Michael Olmos made the announcement following confirmation of the appointment by the City Council.

Recently, Mascia has been serving as assistant Community Development director/city engineer with the City of Visalia, where he managed Engineering Services, Traffic Engineering and capital projects such as the Plaza Interchange over SR 198, the Visalia Animal Care Center, Fire Station 53, and the Lincoln Oval Pedestrian and Vehicular improvements. In Mascia's time with the City, he has worked to obtain more than $4 million in federal funding for traffic operations and construction of bike paths. He is also overseeing development of the upcoming Visalia Emergency Communications Center, including a modern technology-based Traffic Management Center. There are 70 employees in the Community Development Department.

"Nick Mascia brings a wealth of knowledge and extensive experience in managing and administering engineering and community development programs and projects," said Olmos. "We're confident that he will work towards continued economic vibrancy in our community in his new role."

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Hospital

Continued from p. 1

approval.

Hospital At Maximum Capacity

Prior to the addition of a helipad, the most recent add-on at KDMC was the opening of the Acequia Wing in 2009. The medical center has continued to grow in the intervening six years, and is again facing a shortage of space.

"We have been operating Kaweah Delta at full capacity for a full year," Mann said.

Fortunately, room to grow remains in the Acequia Wing, where "shell space" will become home to 32 additional hospital beds. Twenty-four of the beds will occupy a medical/surgical wing on the fifth floor, while the sixth floor will house an expanded neonatal intensive-care unit. The current NICU has 15 beds, and will gain eight additional beds when it moves. The space will also be safer for some of the most critical patients.

"We have to take the NICU up to that unit, not only to expand it, but so it will be a space that meets earthquake standards," Mann said.

The Acequia Wing's second floor will house two C-section operating rooms at a cost of $6.5 million. The fifth- and sixth-floor additions carry a project cost estimate of $21.8 million.

New Facilities

Kaweah Delta will be building at least one new treatment facility, possibly two, in northwest Visalia.

Already a certainty is the Northwest Area Urgent Care Center, which will be located on a 1-acre plot on Demaree Street. Probably.

"We haven't concluded the final property acquisition," Mann said. The project is planned as part of an expanded partnership with the Quail Park retirement community. "It will be a full urgent-care center."

Staffed by MDs, the center will be similar to KDHCD's urgent care center on Court Street on the former Visalia Community Hospital campus, treating conditions such as broken bones and lacerations.

The center will be housed in a 5,200-square-foot facility, including X-ray and lab services, and 14 exam rooms.

The District is also planning an outpatient endoscopy center on its West Campus. What hasn't been decided is whether to build a new clinic or to expand the Sequoia Surgery Center.

"That's under study at this point," Mann said. Either way, cost of the clinic is pegged at $7.7 million. A 2-acre plot remains open on the West Campus.

Upgrades and Demolition

KDHCD will be pouring money into a pair of upgrades, one much bigger than the other. The smaller of the projects is the $3.8 million refurbishment of the Exeter Health Clinic. The larger is a $22 million revamping of the entire district's information systems.

In Exeter, the main clinic building on San Juan Avenue is getting a makeover, including a new 7,000-square-foot parking area.

"We'll be adding new facilities and refurbishing the facilities there," Mann said. "It's been operating at beyond capacity for years."

Additions there include a 5,700-square-foot women's health clinic and lab, and a 5,000-square-foot administration building.

One of the biggest projects is a major reworking of the entire KDHCD IT system.

"It's very significant," said Mann. "We're actually replacing our electronic medical records."

While $22 million seems hefty, Mann says it's actually a bargain when considering the size of the system in question.

"It's actually a very cost-effective solution," he said. "This covers our emergency department, our four hospitals and our outpatient settings, including physician offices."

Finally, for a mere $900,000, the District will tear down a pair of unused office buildings on its main campus and convert the area to temporary parking. The area in question, west of the Acequia Wing, will eventually become the Medical Center's new acute-care wing.

New Hospital By 2025

The current main wing of the hospital, the Mineral King Wing, must be replaced by 2030 in order to comply with state seismic requirements.

A 10-year plan to complete the project is already in works, and the new wing should be open for business by 2025, well ahead of the state deadline.

To fund construction of that project, the District intends to ask voters to approve general obligation bonds, a move that will require 67% approval. Mann believes voters have a trust in the District's financial acumen based on its past performance.

"We have a theme of doing these projects on-time, on-budget," he said.

The bond-rating agency Moody's has assigned KDHCD an A3 rating.

The $100 million bond issue, approved in October, is based on the District's future earnings, and is well within its budget, Mann said.

"We have financial strength to be able to undertake these projects," he said. "We just, on Monday, had our external audit by Moss Adams, confirming that we have three positive qualities that give the best perspective about our financial strength, which include a strong operating margin, solid cash reserves and a strong debt-to-equity ratio."

Woodlake

Continued from p. 1

stolen earlier that day.

As a result of the Instagram message, the Woodlake Police Department began an inquiry into Officer Garibay's personal life, but no investigation was done on Simoni or Hanson, who are teachers at the school. Nor was there an investigation into who sent the profane message to Jane Doe that set the events in motion to Garibay's dismissal. No police report was taken regarding the stolen phone.

A few days later Chief Marquez and Woodlake Lieutenant Aguayo conducted what they referred to as an "Internal Inquiry." For the inquiry they interviewed Garibay about his relationship with Jane Doe. Garibay told his superiors that they are close, but just friends. Garibay later told his lawyers that it was made clear to him during the inquiry that he was in trouble because Jane Doe's husband is a good friend of Woodlake City Manager Ramon Lara, and not because he did anything against department policy.

"If you know what is good for you, you will knock it off," Marquez told Garibay.

Garibay was disciplined as a result of the inquiry and was suspended for three days without pay. He was also ordered verbally by Marquez to cease all contact with Jane Doe.

According to Melo and Sarsfield, it is against the Police Officer Bill of Rights to discipline an officer without an official Internal Affairs investigation, and that the so called "internal inquiry" does not exist in standard police procedure. They also say chiefs of police do not have the right to tell their subordinates with whom they can socialize.

Garibay was told to remove his uniform and leave all of his gear.

After his three day suspension without pay in October, Garibay was hoping that the issue was over. But on November 12 he was called into Chief Marquez' office again and told that a formal Internal Affairs investigation had been initiated. On December 10 Garibay was put on paid administrative leave.

Aguayo was assigned as the Internal Affairs investigator for the case and proceeded to interview the Woodlake police force and numerous members of the Woodlake community. Community members such as Jane Doe's pastor, coworkers and husband were asked if they knew if Garibay was having an affair with Jane Doe, or if they knew there was a sexual/romantic relationship between them, according to the investigative report.

The investigation revolved around Garibay deliberately disobeying a written directive from Marquez ordering Garibay not to see Jane Doe and to immediately report any contact with her. The investigation discovered that, since the so called directive, Garibay had been in phone contact with Jane Doe twice. It also was revealed that Jane Doe had left two bags of grapes for Garibay outside of her house on November 24 at 1am, a fact that was repeated a dozen times in Aguayo's report.

Garibay says he was never given a written directive by Marquez, and Melo and Sarsfield explained that such a directive would have been unenforceable and is highly inappropriate.

Officer Mendez Testifies that Garibay Lied

One of the subjects interviewed in Aguayo's investigation was Officer Jesus Mendez. Mendez reported that Garibay had lied to Chief Marquez during the initial inquiry back in September about the nature of his relationship with Jane Doe. It is based on this testimony from Mendez that a charge of dishonesty was included in the 12 counts against Garibay.

Mendez, who is married, failed to reveal to Aguayo material information that he had made a pass at Jane Doe during a police ride-along but was spurned. It is considered material information because his being rejected by Jane Doe could bias his testimony, according to law suit documentation.

Officer Mendez was transferred to Farmersville three months ago in a deal allegedly worked out with Woodlake Police Chief Marquez. Recently, while at a bar in Woodlake, commenting on the case to a group of women, Mendez said how Marquez either initiated, or they worked it out together, that he would leave the Woodlake Police Department to distance himself from the case, one member of the group told the *Valley Voice*. The woman said, Mendez' alleged goal was to put himself in the clear. Mendez said that Garibay deserved what he got and that he never liked Garibay, she added. She also said that Mendez was nitpicking on Garibay saying that there is no way he could ever handle the position of detective.

The woman knew Mendez personally and felt Mendez was threatened by Garibay because he was good looking, young, talented and had the potential to quickly move up in the Woodlake Police Department, possibly promoted over Mendez.

Ironically, Mendez was engaging in one of the counts Garibay was fired for, which is speaking about the case to those not involved.

Chief Marquez was a former Lieutenant in the Farmersville Police Department before he was appointed as Woodlake Police Chief in 2012.

Is This Why He Fought for Our Country?

The Internal Affairs Investigation concluded that Officer Daniel Garibay was guilty of insubordination and misconduct.

What shocked Garibay the most was the charge of insubordination. After eight years in the military and taking orders from a wide variety of superiors, Garibay was never accused of insubordination. After going above and beyond the call of duty in serving his country he was dismayed that a United States Veteran could be treated so badly.

Garibay served two tours of duty, four years in Iraq and four in Afghanistan. During his service he received 11 medals, of which the combat infantry badge he is most proud.

"Not many people have those," said Melo.

Garibay was part of the US army forces that retook Bagdad in 2005 and was also part of President Obama's surge in 2009. He was honorably discharged with many letters of recommendation.

After leaving the military, Garibay decided to go into law enforcement because he wanted a job that made a difference. He enrolled in the College of the Sequoias Police Academy and graduated in the top five of his class. When he was hired by the Woodlake Police Department he soon decided that was where he wanted to retire. During his few years at the department he had other opportunities to leave but never made the jump. The Woodlake Police Department was close to home, the pay was good and he saw that he had the opportunity to move up.

But things didn't work out that way. Since being fired Garibay has gone back to school and is currently enrolled in Reedley College getting his AA in Criminology. After Reedley he plans on finishing his education at Fresno State.

"I just want to clear my name and move on" said Garibay.

Political Fix

Continued from p. 3

could not see or feel pain as there were no remaining discernible neurons. Gov. Bush was basically forcing a feeding tube in a dead woman's body, while claiming to be pro-life.

To put this in perspective, Florida executed 21 prisoners when Gov. Bush was in office. He aired attack commercials in 1994, a campaign about his opponent going soft on the death penalty.

Now that Gov. Bush's 2016 presidential campaign is on life support, maybe someone could return the favor and shove a feeding tube into it. But like Ms. Schiavo, I don't think it is going to recover.

The one thing I hate more than my rights being violated, is when I see someone else's rights being violated. The Terri Schiavo case outlines a basic difference between Republicans and Democrats. While Republicans get monthly score cards on how well they fight for second amendment rights, Democrats fight for Americans' first amendment rights.

A Millennial-Boomer Road Trip

Millennials are going to change the United States and have already started. They are the Libertarians that the Republicans claim to be, but never were. Millennials do not care who you marry, what or if you smoke, or how you choose to die. They may not all agree with abortion, but are furious if everyone is not given the choice. Millennials also don't get involved in the debate about climate change because deniers are akin to the Flat Earth Society. They are self assured and fearless.

So what does scare a Millennial?

A map.

My high school daughter, Mercedes, and I flew up to Portland for her fall break to visit, Teddy, my oldest daughter. Teddy picked us up at the Portland airport and we were off on a girls' road trip to Vancouver. The first thing that happened when we crossed the border into Canada was Teddy's GPS stopped working. So I reached into my backpack, and did what most boomers do when they need to get somewhere, I opened a map.

I cleverly bought a map of the Pacific Northwest, but unfortunately the insert of Vancouver only had every tenth street, this in a town crisscrossed with impassable rail lines and intersected by several bays and inlets. I was left to navigate our route in ever smaller concentric circles until we finally found our apartment building. After many illegal left turns and near misses with pedestrians who do not understand the concept of a "crosswalk," Teddy was not impressed with my map or my navigation skills. We parked the car until it was time to go home.

We threw our bags in the apartment and settled in the cafe on the bottom floor of our building. Sitting there people watching, we were rather grateful for our impromptu tour of Vancouver. I booked our apartment through airbnb.com in the European section of the city called Gastown, and it was clearly the best location to stay. Downtown was messy and filled with impersonal high-rise apartment complexes. Gastown was incredibly picturesque, like old Europe without the kitsch. Beautiful inlaid brick sidewalks, cobblestone streets, outdoor cafes, lots of fashionably dressed young adults and hip stores, where those who were out walking their dog were men by a ratio of 10 to one over women--a strange thing we noticed every "morning" while enjoying our coffee.

It ends up that we didn't even have to leave the comfort of our cozy apartment building to experience Vancouver, which is fortunate because we never did before noon. The feel of the apartment was the same vibe in all of Vancouver's buildings we entered. Clean lines, no clutter, very modern architecture and interior design. Their minimalist style is the antithesis of a decade's old trend in the United States of "shabby chic" where crafters were known to go prowling garage sales and dumpster diving to find used "treasures" and turn them into home décor.

Walking around Gastown after dinner the first night in Vancouver, I did something very un-Boomer, I bought a selfie stick. I have to admit it is a pretty impressive gadget. I don't have a phone with which it would work but Teddy and Mercedes had a blast. I get a constant litany how Boomers can't take pictures with Millenials' sophisticated phones and the selfie stick relieved me of some of that criticism. I have in the past tried to explain to Mercedes that I am at the tail end of the Boomer generation and don't really relate to them. I am actually a Generation Xer. All explanations fall on deaf ears once Mercedes has made up her mind about something, which brings me to another Millennial characteristic – you can't tell them anything, especially when it comes to technology.

It was raining the next day so we went to the mall, and discovered where every foreigner in British Columbia went on Canada's Thanksgiving Day. Metrotowne is the second largest mall in the country and was conveniently only a 10-minute cab ride away. The girls' faces glazed over when the cab driver and I chatted about how his family fled the Iranian Revolution and settled in Minnesota. They perked up when the cabbie said that pot was legal in Canada and that there were 160 pot dispensaries just in Vancouver.

Mercedes tried to convince Teddy to buy her some pot. I was about to dispense my motherly advice to be careful if anyone ever offers you edibles because they can be unpredictably stronger than a joint. I realized Millennials didn't want to hear a Boomer's practical advice on drugs, and Teddy was just ignoring her, already thinking she might want Chinese for lunch.

We got back to our apartment with enough time for me to make my deadline on the paper. Millennials can entertain themselves with their electronic devices for hours, and that is exactly what they did, the following night. But this night they chatted, sang, put on makeup and wrestled at the foot of my bed as I tried to write. It was late and the streets were still wet from the rain and the red brick was glistening under the street lamps, so I convinced them to go downstairs and take selfies in the carless streets. They eventually did giving me a little quiet time.

The next day was sunny and we walked through Canada Place and along the Sea Wall. The similarities of Vancouver to San Francisco don't stop. The average price of a home is one million dollars, it's an isthmus connected to the rest of Canada with bridges and ferries, there are beaches, a huge homeless population and Vancouver has the second largest Chinatown in North America with an ornate entrance just like in The City.

During our three days in Vancouver we strolled for hours, took dozens of selfies and ate gourmet chocolates, some of which actually made it home to my husband. We laughed until we cried several times, and like all good Americans we made fun of the Canadians, but not much because they were so nice.

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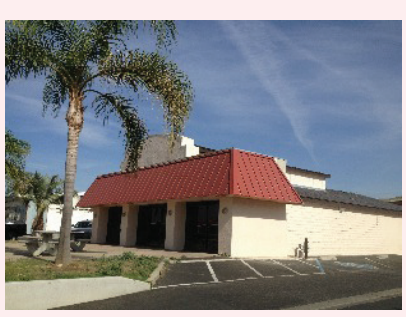

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Porterville Seeks Assistance in Evaluation of Animal Control Shelter

Nancy Vigran

Realizing the need for a new animal control facility or the rebuilding of its current one, the City of Porterville hired the consultation of an independent study by UC Davis' Koret Shelter Medicine Program (KSMP).

Many of the findings of the KSMP report sum up the need to require a nearly complete overhaul, or replacement of the facility. Porterville was ready to begin construction of a new one last year, on property already owned by the city next to the corporation yard, but cost bids came in at twice as high as the original projected costs, so the project was temporarily tabled, according to City Manager John Lollis.

With the idea of reopening discussion by city council and the animal control commission, KSMP was hired to evaluate the current shelter and the possibility of revamping that facility.

"One of the reasons we did the study," said Augie Gonzalez, animal control unit supervisor, "was to get an assessment on whether we want to remodel the old facility or the feasibility of building a new one."

Housing is provided in single-run units at Porterville Animal Control Shelter, where housing is cleaned with occupants inside leading to damp conditions for the dogs. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

A major stumbling block is that the shelter is some 10 miles north of Porterville, formerly owned by the City of Lindsay, which managed the facility. It would be much easier, and preferred, to have a local facility.

"There is a lot of political pressure to have the shelter in Porterville," Gonzalez said. "It (the current facility) is a good shelter, it's just that it's old."

Facility Does Not Meet Current Standards

The KSMP report used 2014 shelter records and three staff veterinarians visited the shelter in July of this year. The result is that the Porterville shelter "does not meet the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Sheltering (Guidelines), and the continued long-term use of the facility is not recommended."

"Major limitations" in the dog area included the use of single-compartment kennels with little choice as to where a dog could spend its day, a lack of even temperatures throughout the kennels, a noisy environment, poor lighting and a lack of sealing between kennel walls and the floor.

It was noted that most of the kennels were structurally sound and maintained in safe working conditions.

For cats, it found caging that was too small with some located on the floor, inadequate ventilation, a lack of bedding and hiding places, poor lighting with no natural light and high-risk practices of unrelated kittens being housed together.

The intake/receiving area was found to have a lack of separation between cats and dogs with limited storage space.

Also found was a limited amount of storage space in the general animal care area, with a lack of food storage areas which also had unregulated temperatures allowing for the potential of food spoilage, and limited room for dish washing. There is no grooming space and no outdoor facilities for exercise and play yards as well as meet and greet areas.

From evaluation of the 2014 data provided, there is sufficient kennel spacing for dogs, but being single kennel units, which do not meet current best practice information. There is insufficient and inadequate amount of cat housing.

The report also indicated a lack of bedding in some kennels and where bedding was provided, some was found on the ground and getting wet. There were also no weight scales onsite. These problems have now been rectified, according to staff reports.

Other problems included the fact that kennels are being cleaned and hosed down with the dogs still in them leaving a damp environment for the dogs, and a lack of differential between areas where the dogs eat and eliminate.

Animal Control Short Staffed

At issue is not just the age of the shelter, but also that the shelter is short-staffed, Gonzalez said.

Compared to Tulare County and the City of Tulare animal control resources, "we are out numbered three to one," he said.

Porterville has two animal control officers, one shelter supervisor, one office staff personnel and Gonzalez, the unit supervisor and a couple of part-time aids, Gonzalez said. The shelter houses stray pets from Porterville, Lindsay and Woodlake.

Dogs at the Porterville Animal Control Shelter are being fed by Jill, a SWAP program participant, who specifically requested her work time be spend at the shelter. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

In addition, Tulare County Sheriff's Work Alternative Program (SWAP) sometimes provides extra help. SWAP is a program in which non-violent offenders are offered the option of working in the community as opposed to spending time in jail. But that rate of help has declined with early release of inmates, Gonzalez said.

"We are extremely short-handed," Gonzalez said.

With regard to staffing, the KMSP report only directly addressed the need for hiring of a live-release coordinator for the shelter.

But staff has noted that calculations of hourly requirements with the current length of stay guidelines show that current staffing levels are not adequate to meet the basic standard of care to allow for 15 minutes each for basic care for dogs and cats and 15-45 minutes of intake time for dogs and cats.

Currently on the table for city council, is the hiring of a live-release coordinator, who would oversee adoption activities, Lollis said, to which "council has spoken favorably." The intent would be that the better or more proficient this position works out, the fewer hours would need to be afforded to the position itself.

Gonzalez has hopes for more personnel to better care for the animals and take some of the load off of those already working in animal control. While the shelter is currently seeking volunteers, there has been a lack of response, he said. One reason, he added, is because of the distance of the shelter from the city.

Needs and Recomendations

Two of the other more "strongly" recommended issues KSMP believes the Porterville Animal Control program needs to address are its practices in accepting healthy cats and a need to decrease the length-of-stay in the facility.

The shelter houses 150-200 animals pretty much year-round, Gonzalez said, with a lot more dogs than cats. He tries to keep the numbers down to 150 or so, but it is difficult. As an animal lover, Gonzalez said he still follows the old standard of keeping strays for six days prior to making them available for adoption, giving more time for owners to locate their missing pets. Current state law requires 72 hours, or three days.

Many options of proper housing for dogs and cats along with examples of intake rooms, exam areas, food prep areas and exercise yards were given along with the report. Proper management techniques were also offered.

City Council and the animal control commission held a joint study session in late October to review the KSMP findings and further discuss the impending decision on building a new facility or redesigning the old.

Some cat cages sit on the floor of the shelter cat room, which is ill-advised by current standards. Nancy Vigran/Valley Voice

Briefly...

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS OF THE SEQUOIAS SOCIAL SWIRL

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias, which serves over 3,000 children in Tulare County, will hold its major fundraiser of the year November 20 and 21.

The two-day event begins with a golf tournament at the Visalia Country Club on Friday, November 20. Sponsorships are available, ranging from tee/green signage to the platinum sponsorship. The golf tournament is followed on November 21 with a gala at the Visalia Country Club.

Proceeds from the annual event will help make possible the wide variety of programs offered by the Boys & Girls Clubs, such as computer labs, service projects, sports, homework help, art and educational field trips. All programs are offered at no additional cost, beyond the $10 per child annual fee.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias receives no funding directly from the national organization and relies upon local support, explained Galen Quenzer, executive director.

"The Social Swirl is hugely important to us and we are grateful to the businesses and individuals who recognize how important it is to support the youth of our area, particularly those who need us the most," Quenzer said.

For information on sponsoring Social Swirl, contact Lynn Dodds, 592-4074; lynn.dodds@bgcsequoias.org.

ANNUAL TOY DRIVE MAKES HOLIDAYS BRIGHT FOR CHILDREN

Tulare County businesses, agencies and community partners have begun collecting toys for the Child Welfare Services (CWS) and Friends of Tulare County Toy Drive. Community residents are asked to help "Brighten a Child's Winter Sky" by participating in the annual toy drive. A contribution can help ensure that these children and youth do not go without a gift this holiday season.

"The efforts of Tulare County employees and the generous donations from the community are appreciated and welcomed by the children and youth who are not able to be at home during the holiday season," said John A. Mauro, L.C.S.W., deputy director of CWS.

Making a donation is as easy as dropping off a new, unwrapped gift for a child or youth at one of the many collection boxes already set out at community sites by volunteers. Donors can also log on to www.friendsoftularecounty.org, where instructions are available to help you choose a child, print a star, and learn about the gifts that are on the child's wish list; then attach that star to the unwrapped gift and drop it off at one of the many collection sites throughout the county. Contributions will be accepted through Friday, December. Gifts will be distributed throughout the week of December 7.

Community members who wish to make a financial contribution can do so through Friends of Tulare County by mailing checks to 5957 S. Mooney Blvd., Visalia, CA 93277. Please write "CWS Toy Drive" in the memo line.

More information can be found by logging on to www.tchhsa.org

This annual event is made possible by collaborative partners including CWS, Friends of Tulare County, Tulare County Board of Supervisors, Kaweah-Delta District Hospital, Bikers United for Kids and many others.

FIND "JUST RIGHT" GIFTS AT THE FRIENDS OF TULARE COUNTY HOLIDAY BOOK SALE

The Friends of the Tulare County Library can help you with your Holiday shopping! Come by the Visalia Library on Saturday, November 14 from 9am to 3pm for the Friends of the Library Book Sale, where the Friends will be rolling out the best of their available books, including beautiful coffee table books.

Find a gift for friends, family, and something special for yourself, too! Held inside the Visalia Branch located at 200 W. Oak Ave, the sale is sure to have something for everyone!

The Friends know every book has its reader and every reader his or her book. So the sale features a variety of books, including fiction, mystery, history, biography, art, and cookbooks. High quality books and a wide range of bargains will be available with prices starting as low as $ .50 each. The sale includes a large selection of hardcover fiction and DVDs available for $1.00 each and special sets and coffee table books priced at $5.00 each.

Proceeds from the sale are used to buy books and equipment and to sponsor programs at all branches of the Tulare County Library. For further information, call 559-713-2709.

LEGACY VOICES PROGRAM SPEAKS TO JAPANESE AMERICAN WORLD WAR II HISTORY

The Tulare County Library and Tulare County Office of Education proudly present Legacy Voices: The World War II Japanese American Experience on Friday, November 6 from 4-5:30pm in the Visalia Library's Blue Room. Legacy Voices is a special presentation by Saburo and Marion Masada, who travel around the country sharing their powerful firsthand experiences of being interned in U.S. camps.

After the bombing of Pearl Harbor, the United States government enacted Executive Order 9066, leading to the forced internment of more than 110,000 Japanese Americans. These imprisonments took place without charges, trials, or convictions. Two-thirds of the people imprisoned were U.S.-born citizens, denied the due process promised to them by the U.S. Constitution.

Legacy Voices is held in conjunction with Shades of Tulare County Redux, an historical photo exhibit being held through December 10. The exhibit consists of over 30 images collected from personal photo albums of local residents of Asian descent in 1999 during the Shades of Tulare County project. Attendees are invited to view the exhibit before or after the presentation.

The presentation and exhibit are both free events. No registration is required. For more information on these events, please contact Lisa Raney at (559) 713-2723 or Kate Stover (559) 651-1482 ext. 3648.

The Visalia Library is located at 200 W. Oak Avenue in Visalia. The Tulare County Library serves all the citizens of Tulare County with locations in fifteen communities, five book machines, and an online presence at www.tularecountylibrary.org.

VUSD'S DR. WHEATON TO JOIN TULARE COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION IN FEBRUARY

Tulare County Superintendent of Schools Jim Vidak is pleased to announce that Visalia Unified School District Superintendent Dr. Craig Wheaton will be joining the Tulare County Office of Education in February as deputy superintendent of Administrative Services. Dr. Wheaton announced his resignation as superintendent at the October 27 meeting of the Visalia Unified Board of Education.

"Craig will be an excellent addition to our leadership team," said Mr. Vidak. "In his 37 years in education, he has had a very wide range of teaching and administrative experience at both large and small districts." Prior to his tenure at Visalia Unified, Dr. Wheaton served 24 years with Corcoran Unified as a high school counselor and coach and an elementary principal. "His experience with small district leadership will be a tremendous asset to more than 30 school districts in Tulare County that have enrollments of 2,500 or less," Mr. Vidak said.

Craig Wheaton joined the Visalia Unified School District in 2002 as director of state and federal projects and later as an area administrator. Since July 2010, he has served as Visalia Unified School District superintendent. Dr. Wheaton earned his doctorate in education from Pepperdine University in 2001.

WESTERN FARM GROUPS CALL FOR COMPROMISE DROUGHT LEGISLATION

Saying that they are counting on Congress to ensure that Western water users have every tool available to survive and recover from drought, a regional coalition of more than 100 organizations urged a Senate committee today to create compromise legislation to address water shortages.

In a letter to the chair and ranking member of the Senate Energy & Natural Resources Committee, the organizations asked the committee to merge a number of separate drought bills into "a single, effective compromise bill" that can be signed by the end of the year.

That bill should provide federal agencies with more flexibility under existing environmental laws to encourage "a more cooperative approach" toward achieving water goals, the letter said, urging legislation that shifts regulation of water resources "away from the current adversarial structure that regards agriculture as a harmful activity that must be minimized in order to maximize environmental benefits."

The coalition, comprised of national and regional organizations and groups from California and 11 other states, stressed the need for investment in Western water infrastructure, including additional storage, and recommended the streamlining of permitting processes to make water resources investment "more attractive and affordable" for regional, state and local entities.

Two bills before the committee, offered by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and Rep. David Valadao, R-Hanford, specifically address California drought concerns. The coalition noted that the two bills take "sometimes starkly different approaches" to achieving common goals, but that the differences "should not be irreconcilable" as Congress works for effective drought relief.

"California and the West continue to suffer from drought and water shortages, and Congress must move quickly to do what it can to help people throughout the region," California Farm Bureau Federation President Paul Wenger said. "El Niño won't solve our problems. Only thoughtful adjustments in federal policies can help us take full advantage of future wet winters to shield the West against inevitable droughts."

The California Farm Bureau Federation works to protect family farms and ranches on behalf of more than 57,000 members statewide and as part of a nationwide network of more than 6.2 million Farm Bureau members.

TULARE COUNTY PROBATION DEPARTMENT AWARDED GRANT TO HELP MONITOR HIGH-RISK DUI OFFENDERS

Felony and repeat misdemeanor DUI offenders are over represented in traffic crashes involving alcohol and other drugs. An $83,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety to the Tulare County Probation Department will help make sure that these worst-of-the-worst offenders are complying with all court orders.

"The intent of the Tulare County DUI Probation Supervision Program is to respond quickly and aggressively to felony DUI offenders through the assignment of a full-time probation officer," said Tulare County Chief Probation Officer Christie Myer.

The grant will continue to fund an officer to intensely monitor drivers on probation for felony DUI or multiple misdemeanor DUI convictions. Supervision for these high-risk offenders will include:

Unannounced home searches
Random alcohol and drug testing
Special monitoring to ensure compliance with court-ordered DUI education and treatment programs

The Intensive Probation Supervision for High-Risk Felony and Repeat DUI Offenders grant is aimed at reducing the number of persons killed and injured in alcohol and other drug related collisions in the county. In 2013, 20 were killed and 298 injured in such crashes in Tulare County.

"Overall, California's roadways are among the safest in the nation," said OTS Director Rhonda Craft. "But to meet future mobility, safety, and accessible transportation objectives, we have to work very hard together to reach our common goal - zero deaths on our roadways. The Office of Traffic Safety and the Tulare County Probation Department want to work with everyone to create a culture of traffic safety across the County of Tulare and the state."

Funding for the grant is through the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.

Saucedo's Final Hearing Before the Commission on Judicial Performance

Ron Pierce
Special to the Valley Voice

On October 7, on the proverbial heels of the week-long trial earlier this year before the Special Masters, the Commission on Judicial Performance convened in San Francisco's Ninth Circuit Court for final arguments concerning Tulare County Superior Court Judge Valeriano Saucedo.

The focus of allegations of judicial misconduct in 2013 toward his previous courtroom clerk, Priscilla Tovar, the proceedings represented Saucedo's final hearing before the Commission renders its decision on whether he continues as a California judge.

The seats of the modestly-sized courtroom were filled to capacity by friends and family, interspersed with a few reporters. Attorney Randall Miller was present as Saucedo's counsel. Squaring off against him were examiners Gary Schons and Sei Shimoguchi of the CJP's Office of Trial Counsel, who were replacing previous examiners James Harrigan and Valerie Marchant in the matter.

The nine-member panel (composed of Judge Erica R. Yew, Chairperson; Judge Thomas M. Maddock, Justice Ignazio J. Ruvolo, Nanci E. Nishimura, Esq., and public members Dr. Michael A. Moodian, Mary Lou Aranguren, Richard Simpson, Sandra Talcott, and Adam Torres) sat in controlled silence as Examiner Schons brought the matter to date, picking up where the proceedings had left off in April.

Progressing through the details of Saucedo's misconduct as noted in the Special Masters Report 1, Examiner Schons discussed Canon 2 and 2A of California's Code of Judicial Ethics, focusing on case law treating offenses to 2A as separate and distinct from offenses to Canon 2. He wrapped up his arguments by asking the Commission to remove Saucedo from office.

"We believe the public does need to be protected here because any judge that would engage in the kind of deceptive, irrational conduct that he engaged in here and then lie about it to the Commission and the Special Masters is not someone that should be entrusted with making decisions which affect other people's lives. [...] We assert that any other result other than removal would signal to the public and the judiciary that the bar is way too low and judges aren't being held to high standards. [...] And that is in addition to the fact that his conduct was so contrived and so bizarre, who is to say what the judge might do if left on the bench?"

In rebuttal, counsel for Saucedo argued that certain perceptions of Judge Saucedo's misconduct and untruthfulness before the Special Masters were more attributable to misunderstanding and nervousness. He reiterated Judge Saucedo's insistence that he was not the author of the "anonymous letter [regarding Tovar]," and had not acted in a judicial capacity in many of the circumstances involved. Miller provided similar defense argument as made previously before the Special Masters in April. For its part, the Commission appeared unfased by the quick synopsis of Saucedo's defense rendered by Miller, who then offered the remainder of his speaking time to Judge Saucedo himself, in an apparent attempt to personalize Saucedo to his jury.

With only a few minutes to speak, Saucedo regaled the Commission with a story of his early childhood in the Chicano Movement of the 1960's.

"When I was in high school, I walked into a store. And this man saw me with my shirttails out, and he walked up to me and he said, 'Son, you shouldn't wear your shirttails out because it gives a bad appearance; it gives people a bad impression about you.' He was white; I was brown. And very easily I could have gotten in his face and said, 'Why are you down on me? Why are you doing this to me?' I didn't. I heard his message. I tucked my shirttails in. I went on, graduated from UC Berkeley, came back to my community; and I searched out that man, and I thanked him for the message that he had given me."

His testimony harkened back to testimony he made before the Special Masters on April 7, 2015, in which he attempted to relate the same or similar story.

"I am a little bit embarrassed by it, but growing up under the circumstances under which I grew up, I learned early on that I could not be -- if I was only as good as the white kids around me, that I would not succeed, that I had to be twice as good only to have an equal standing. And so for me, working twice as hard came to symbolize that. And that is that I had to be twice as good as the white kids around me, otherwise I couldn't succeed because of the color of my skin. [...] And so the context of the conversation with Ms. Tovar was in that context, was that we had to work twice as hard to achieve and to accomplish. She's Hispanic, like I am, and that is what I was trying to convey."

With both parties resting, the Commission began questioning on what they obviously felt had not been fully discussed – the determination by the Special Masters that Judge Saucedo had not been truthful in this testimony before them. Chairperson Yew addressed Examiner Schons directly.

"Setting aside, you know, the alleged misrepresentation of the authorship of the letter, what weight do you believe this Commission should put on the Special Masters' findings that Judge Saucedo was not forthright during the proceedings?"

Examiner Schons was careful to measure his response.

"We would argue that in addition to his conduct, the fact that he was not forthright, the fact that he was found to lack credibility, that he, in fact, perjured himself in denying, for example, the anonymous letter, is of great weight. And, of course, there are other aspects of credibility where he urged Ms. Tovar to lie, and he, in fact, lied about things that he did in the course of his conduct. All of that goes to his credibility. All of that goes to his integrity and ought to weigh in the balance of the discipline that the Commission would hand down."

Miller argued that Judge Saucedo was continuing to maintain his denial of authoring the anonymous letter regarding Tovar, and that any previous testimony he had rendered in the matter appearing untruthful, was more attributable to nervousness than evasion. Expressing Saucedo's admission to, and apology for, certain actions at issue, Miller nevertheless countered Examiner Schons' arguments by claiming the evidence before the Commission was more in the realm of circumstantial, and so fell short of the standard of evidence required in meting out judicial punishment as severe as removal from office.

Discussion narrowed to the legal differences between "judicial" versus "administrative" capacity, providing an informative glimpse into the wheedling which pervades discussion of this larger issue on a larger scale. Speaking assertively, Justice Ruvolo voiced issue with Miller's arguments.

"What about factors that constitute abuse or misuse of court staff by a judge? Aren't those actions acting in a judicial capacity, when a judge takes advantage or misuses or abuses a staff member?" Ruvollo asked pointedly.

"Well, if you're talking about Ms. Tovar, I would say I don't think that that was the circumstance here because, by definition, the interaction with Ms. Tovar had nothing to do with her job or responsibilities in the courtroom," Miller responded.

"She was his clerk," Ruvollo retorted sharply, raising tension.

"She was his clerk" Miller parroted calmly. "I agree that there was that connection. But beyond that, by design – according to the Examiner's charges here, by design, it had nothing to do with her job responsibilities or any court related or administrative tasks."

"If that were true, then any sexual assault by a judge on the judge's staff would not constitute official judicial acts," Ruvollo pointed out.

"It may not in some circumstances," Miller replied. "I do agree. It would depend on the circumstances. But I would think that there would be situations where that would not be in a judge's judicial capacity."

Almost precisely an hour later the Commission adjourned, stating it would be meeting in closed session to deliberate before providing written decision to the public. While the Commission's decision would become final after 30 days, within that time, Saucedo has the right to petition the California Supreme Court for review of the Commission's determination. Its decision as to whether Judge Saucedo continues as a California judge could be rendered as early as November.

Meanwhile, Saucedo faces a federal lawsuit by Tovar in Fresno's Eastern District Court (Case No. 1:2015at00425), under to 42 USC § 1983. It is possible that court will pay close attention to any decision the CJP makes regarding the administrative or judicial capacities of Judge Saucedo's misconduct toward Tovar.

Questions still linger as to what these events mean for William Fabricius of Ducor, who continues to claim that Judge Saucedo signed an illegally placed order against him, which resulted in the taking and murder of twenty-five of his ranch dogs – without notice or hearing. Specifically, Fabricius is claiming that Saucedo's order was issued in the midst of the "two-month period" for which the judge is being tried by the Commission; that Saucedo's mental focus on Tovar, up to and including Saucedo's threat of suicide during that time adversely impacted his case.

"While he was chasing Tovar's affections, Saucedo signed a warrant bypassing my rights under Food and Agriculture Code, and county ordinances. The only time I knew someone had complained about my dogs was when animal control came rolling in like SWAT; dragging my dogs around, shooting them with tranqs. Most were pups. I never even had a chance to said goodbye," Fabricius said.

Born near Tornillo, Texas in 1951, Valeriano Saucedo's family settled in California in the early 1960's, where he spent long hours of his childhood working daily on everything from apples to olives – both before and after school. He labored right up until he began attending UC Berkeley, following that with a stint at Stanford Law School.

Saucedo began his legal career in 1976 as a labor lawyer with California Rural Legal Assistance, starting as a staff attorney and eventually being named that agency's statewide director. From there he moved to private practice, battling the "powers-that-be" in agribusiness and working to improve pay and working conditions for migrant farm laborers. In 1990, he was elected to city council for his hometown of Lindsay, becoming its mayor three years later. Meanwhile, Saucedo scored victories in court on behalf of farmworkers.

In 1995, he forced Dole Food Company and its subsidiaries to pay $1 million in damages and forced it to reform its hiring its practices toward settling a sex discrimination claim brought by female workers at citrus packing houses. In 1997, he won a $500,000 settlement for Watsonville strawberry pickers who claimed they were underpaid and forced to provide their own farm equipment. He also helped litigate a high-profile federal class action brought by hundreds of former Mexican contract workers known as braceros against the United States and Mexican governments as well as several banks.

California's first Hispanic judge, Saucedo was appointed by Democratic Governor Gray Davis to a vacancy in Tulare Superior Court in May of 2001. Judge Saucedo might be the third Tulare County judge to be punished by the CJP in its history.

Previously, the CJP publically admonished Tulare County judges Stephen Drew in 1996, and Howard Broadman in 1998. Broadman was further censured the following year.

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Viewpoint

A Look Back, Five Years at Visalia Unified School District

Craig Wheaton Ed.D., Superintendent

I believe all of you know that I have announced my resignation as superintendent effective February 1, 2016. I have been given the opportunity to serve the families and children of Tulare County as the Deputy Superintendent of Administrative Services for Tulare County Office of Education.

It has been a pleasure working with the Board of Trustees, the VUSD staff, and the families of Visalia. It has been an enormous honor to serve as superintendent over the last five and a half years. I believe that together we have accomplished many projects and goals that greatly benefited students, parents, and the community as a whole. In a quick look back over the last five years there are a few highlights that we all can celebrate:

- Keeping the district financially solvent and healthy through the worst recession since the Great Depression - without any layoffs, or significant program reductions or eliminations
- Ongoing Academic Performance Index growth with the final API at 789 in 2013
- Five years of graduation rate increases, 80% to 92%, nearly 12% above the state average
- Construction and opening of Shannon Ranch Elementary School in 2012
- Passage of Measure E in November, 2012, a $60 million bond for construction and modernization
- Completion of the Redwood Academic Building in 2015
- Planning and construction of a new middle school scheduled to be completed in 2016
- Installation of solar at eighteen locations around the district, saving nearly a quarter of our electricity costs.
- Implementation of new, more rigorous state standards
- Expanding broadband internet at all schools and providing nearly 20,000 Chromebook devices so that our students have access to the technology tools they need everyday

The district is functioning at a high level, making progress on many different fronts. There are many talented individuals ready to continue the work in the district, and we are poised for continued growth and improvement in all areas of academic achievement. I applaud the Board of Trustees for their appointment of Dr. Oto as Interim Superintendent. He will be able to provide leadership during this critical period in Visalia Unified. He has my full support and I am confident the district will continue to grow and change and provide an educational program that prepares all students for limitless opportunities.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve the community as Superintendent of Visalia Unified School District.

Helping Our Kids, Helping Our Communities

Galen Quenzer and Tom Johnson

What can you get for $10 a year?

If you're a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias, $10 gets you a lot.

Sports. Most of our members come from families that cannot afford to be on a traveling team or don't make the school team. Thanks to the Boys & Girls Club, they can afford to play baseball, soccer, tennis or football.

Computer labs. Many of our kids don't have access to computers or the internet at home. With support from our Board of Directors and donors, we have computer labs so youth can get hands-on training technology.

Tutoring. Members receive daily homework help at each of our clubs.

Field trips. We have wonderful community partners who support our mission. Working with Sequoia Riverlands Trust and Eagle's Nest, for example, our members take field trips to the Kaweah Oaks Preserve. Businesses host career exploration opportunities and our members travel to colleges throughout California.

Service. We have learned that it's not about entertainment and video games – teens continually ask how they can help. We connect them with meaningful volunteer service, such as homework help, recreation and serving seniors at a nursing home.

These programs are available for youth ages 6 to 18. However, our board has been working to refine how we can most directly impact young lives, so we are placing a greater emphasis on "tweens" and middle school age youth.

It has been quite a journey for the organization since the first club was established in Exeter in 1993. As with most non-profit organizations, we have had our funding struggles and we continually assess community needs to be sure we are providing the services that offer the greatest impact.

Today, thanks to a committed, hands-on Board of Directors, belt-tightening, and a revitalized passion to reach the under-served youth of Tulare County, our organization is stronger than ever.

We are now in a position of growth, with a focus on quality programs and increasing services for teens and pre-teens. We have added a teen coordinator and that program has already grown by nearly 40 kids.

The Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias serves about 3,000 kids a year, who come from seven communities. For some, even $10 per year is not affordable, but there are no barriers to their participation. We find ways to allow them to participate, including working for their membership fee.

People are surprised to learn that the local Boys & Girls Club receives no funding from the national organization. We have to raise funds locally in order to continue to meet our mission of serving young people, especially those who need us most.

Our goal is to help each member realize his or her potential as a productive, responsible, caring citizen and to do that, we need the ongoing support of generous individuals and businesses.

The cost to the organization to provide this wealth of services is $400 per child, yet we charge just $10 a year.

The difference between the actual cost and the membership fee is you.

(Tom Johnson is the president of the Board of Directors of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Sequoias; Galen Quenzer is the executive director.)

Lessons Learned Through Attending Wendelstedt Umpiring School

Stefan Barros

With the World Series just wrapped up, the pressure for players and managers has decreased, along with the intensity. But there is another group of people on a baseball field, often forgotten: The umpires.

Umpires are mostly ignored when they are doing a good job and severely criticized when making a controversial or questionable call. The expansion of instant replay has alleviated that criticism, slightly. The pressure on an umpire in any situation, at any level, appears to be only known and understood by the men and women who have serve as umpires.

Along with being a feature writer for the Valley Voice, I also umpire high school baseball, and have worked Cal Ripken and Little League in the past. My experience with umpiring also extends to professional umpiring school at the Harry Wendelstedt School for Umpires, which I attended in Daytona Beach, Florida, from January 2 through February 4 of 2014.

At the Wendelstedt Umpire School, you basically have to get rid of all the "bad" habits you had as an umpire prior to attending. They teach you all of their mechanics, and the instructors are professional umpires from minor and major league baseball.

It really is a surreal experience to have instructors like Jerry Layne, who has been a MLB umpire for 26 years, and has seen work in playoff and World Series games. That part of it seemed intimidating at first, but I quickly realized that Layne and all of the other instructors were trying to make you the best umpire possible and bring out the best in yourself. Having the opportunity to shake Layne's hand, along with that of the man who runs the school, Hunter Wendelstedt, on orientation day was surely a moment to remember.

Hunter Wendelstedt is the son of the school's founder, Harry Wendelstedt, and is himself a veteran major league umpire of 17 years. That's what made my time at umpire school probably the most enjoyable of my life. Being around umpires who have the experience of doing it at the highest level, and in the most pressure-packed situations.

What had to the best part of umpire school though, was have the privilege to interact with other students attending that were from all over the world. There were students from Canada, Puerto Rico, Germany and Japan. My roommate was from Newfoundland, Canada and it was really enjoyable conversing with someone from another country and to see baseball through the eyes of someone not from the US.

Just being able to converse with people who were from all around the US and all around the world was really a neat experience for me. It was the first time in life I spent an extended amount of time with people who were not from my area, so getting to find out what people are like around the country was an awesome experience.

The reason why I decided to attend the Wendelstedt Umpire school in the first place was that I was looking to become an umpire in professional baseball. I knew it was going to be tough, but I believe that I underestimated just how tough it would be to get through the school. There were 137 students in all, and only 27 would move on to become umpires in professional baseball.

Going in I had high expectations for myself, and thought that if I didn't become a professional umpire after this, the whole experience would be a failure. After about the second day of training, I realized that the instructors were teaching mechanics and techniques that I was not comfortable with. It was around that point that my expectations started to shift a bit, because there were other umpires who were picking up on techniques faster than I was, and I started getting flustered when I'd mess-up on footwork or on some drill we had worked on.

After that first couple days I just told myself just go out, have fun, and whatever happens, happens. I wasn't going to put pressure on myself. Even though I pretty much knew I wasn't the type of umpire they were looking for at the time, I still went out and tried to do what I could to impress the instructors. I did that in the week that followed, but after that as the techniques become tougher to learn, I lagged behind. In essence, that was what I was told in my evaluation at the end of school.

Going in to the evaluation day, I already knew that I hadn't performed well enough to become a professional umpire. What I was told on evaluation was only confirmation of what I had seen from myself over the course of five weeks. I did feel nervous for a lot of the guys that they were on the edge of becoming professional umpires, or going home.

The five weeks I spent in Daytona Beach really was the experience of a lifetime, and I will never forget it. It didn't end the way I wanted it to, but it was all still worth it. I became a better umpire for it, and it gave me the confidence to go ahead and work high school baseball, and hopefully college baseball, at some point. I would just like to thank the instructors and fellow students that made this an enjoyable experience for me.

Comments & Letters

Nunes to Remain as Intelligence Committee Chairman

Congressman Devin Nunes (CA-22) today issued the following statement announcing his intention to remain Chairman of the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence:

"I am honored to have been asked by the new Speaker of the House, Paul Ryan, to continue serving as Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. Our nation faces unprecedented global threats ranging from the growing risk of deadly terrorism to debilitating cyber-attacks, and the Intelligence Community's response to these threats requires diligent Congressional oversight. After careful reflection and in light of the Speaker's wish for me to continue this important role, I have decided to remain Chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. As we move forward under the leadership of Speaker Ryan, it will be important to complete the good work we have done on an intelligence authorization bill and to get cybersecurity legislation passed to the President's desk."

Speaker Ryan said, "The world has gotten only more dangerous, and serious times call for serious leaders. That's why I've asked Rep. Devin Nunes to stay on as chairman of the House Intelligence Committee. Devin and Armed Services Committee Chairman Mac Thornberry have done great work holding the administration accountable for its national-security failures, and I want them to continue their strong partnership. Though Congressman Nunes has been a terrific ally and staunch defender of conservative principles on the Ways and Means Committee, I am grateful for his continued leadership of the Intelligence Committee."

Chairman Nunes added, "As a member of the Ways and Means Committee, I look forward to continuing our work to resolve our nation's unfunded liabilities, reform healthcare, open new markets to American goods and services, and especially to overhaul the tax code. These pressing issues are long-time priorities for Speaker Ryan, and I anticipate that Congress will energetically advance solutions under his Speakership."

Devin

"Narrow Views on Taking Away our Constitutional Rights"

Catherine Doe,

I loved your article you wrote on the 15th of October in the political fix. You boldly called out republican reactions to Benghazi as being politicized, and not about a state department head lying over and over again about a video instead of admitting she failed to protect our ambassador. Also bringing it to every ones attention that over 33,000 Americans are killed by guns every year, but accidentally omit that over two thirds of those were suicides. Then you brilliantly point out that an economist says that states with tighter gun control laws have fewer gun related deaths. Lets not tell anyone that Chicago, a city with no gun shops because of strict laws, had double the murders than the entire state of Texas!

Did you know that the wonderful country of Mexico outlawed guns for its citizens, and only 1,621 people were murdered in August alone! I would ask you, if you were about to be a victim of a violent crime, are you going to call your local ACLU rep or are you going to call a policeman to show up with a gun to make you safe? Thank you anyway for showing me why this paper is free, because much like NPR, nobody would ever pay to read such one sided narrow views on taking away our constitutional rights.

Sincerely,
Jay D
The Silent Majority

Bark for Life – American Cancer Society Benefit Saturday, November 7

The Exeter Relay for Life Team and the Exeter Bark Park will host the 3rd annual Bark for Life event, on Saturday, November 7, 2015 in Exeter. Funds raised will benefit the American Cancer Society's fight to end cancer by helping support research, treatment, education, survivor support and cures. The event is open to everyone! Bring your dog(s) and walking shoes and join us for the walk on November 7th at 9:00 am. In addition to the walk, the event will have demonstrations, exhibits, and pet friendly resources for your furry friend.

Registration starts at 8:30 am at the Exeter Bark Park on "F" Street and Palm across from the Exeter's City Hall and Fire Department. The Bark for Life event kicks off at 9:00 am and features a walk about town. The registration fee is $10 in advance or $15 on the day of the event and includes a luminary bag which will be displayed at our main event next May. Make all checks and donations payable to the American Cancer Society. Registration forms can be picked up at Exeter Veterinary Hospital or you may also visit the Exeter Bark for Life page on Facebook to download form and find out more about the great day planned!

The American Cancer Society Bark for Life is a fundraising event honoring the life-long contributions of our Canine Caregivers. It presents an opportunity for people to be empowered through their canine companion partnerships and to contribute to the fight to end cancerthrough the mission of the American Cancer Society.

Canine companions demonstrate unconditional love, joy, security, compassion, support and have no judgments of cancer survivors' abilities or appearances. The American Cancer Society Bark for Life is an irresistible way to partner with your canine best friend, smile, make new friends – canine & human – and take a stand against cancer. In addition,you may support the Exeter Relay for Life event scheduled for May 2016 at the EUHS Stadium (although dogs are not allowed at that event). Register your team at www.relayforlife.org/exeterca.

Dog owners, make sure your dog is properly vaccinated, is on a leash, and that you clean up after your pets while at the Bark for Life event. This will help keep our city and the Exeter Bark Park a nice place for all to enjoy! The park will not be open to off-leash dogs during the Bark for Life event on November 7, from 8:00 am to 2:00 pm. Notices will be posted at the park to let park patrons know that off-leash dogs will not be allowed that day during the event.

Sent as a courtesy by:
Friends of Residential Exeter Dogs
A nonprofit charity which supports the
Exeter Bark Park

CORRECTION-- HEAT Wins First Round Against the City of Hanford

David Paynter of Paynter Realty and Investments did not illegally fill a portion of Mussel Slough as stated in the October 15 issue of the Valley Voice. The developer submitted a site plan to the City of Hanford in May of 2007 to build Lowes that was slated to cover half a remnant of Mussel Slough. The Hanford City Council and Hanford City Planning Commission approved the plan to build Lowes thus allowing the filling in of that part of Mussel Slough. Hanford Environmental Awareness Team (HEAT) sued to prevent this from happening.

In December of 2007, The City, Paynter and HEAT came to an amicable agreement to mitigate the damages caused to Mussel Slough by the construction of Lowes. Mitigation included extending Mussel Slough to make up for the part he filled in and creating a draining basin. Paynter also agreed to replant the riparian trees that would be removed by the construction of Lowes.

While the author of the article, Catherine Doe, regrets her mistake, she would like to emphasize that it is not the fault of developers who come to town and pick the most economically lucrative locations for their developments. It is the responsibility of the City of Hanford to protect the city's natural resources for current and future generations. One of those natural resources that needs protection from further destruction is Mussel Slough.

Veteran's Corner

Veterans Day Events

Joe Wright

Veterans Day, November 11, is set aside to thank and honor all men and women who served honorably in the military. In fact, Veterans Day is largely intended to thank living Veterans for their service, to acknowledge that their contributions to our national security are appreciated, and to underscore the fact that all those who served – not only those who died – have sacrificed and done their duty. As we salute America's heroes on Veterans Day, there are many activities the community is encouraged to participate in.

On November 10, Lemoore High School is hosting the 24th Annual Patriotic Concert, "Honor Our Colors." The concert is at the Lemoore High School Event Center and begins at 7pm. Donations will be accepted as well as canned food/new baby items.

On Veterans Day, November 11th, the Hanford Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 5869 will host the Fourth Annual Veterans Festival at the Kings County Fairgrounds. The Festival starts at 10:30 am and runs until 4 pm. There will be music, food, raffles throughout the day, motorcycle and car clubs, bounce houses, drill team competition, and numerous other family oriented activities. There is a Veteran "Stand Down" from 8-10 am. Admission and parking are free.

Also on Veterans Day, November 11, American Legion Post 3 is conducting a Veterans Day Service at the Hanford Cemetery "Tank" at 10 am. For more information call 583-1169. Fleet Reserve Post 261 in Lemoore is hosting a Veterans Day potluck at 12 pm at the Club 261 in Lemoore.

To finish up the day, the City of Lemoore and American Legion Post 100 are hosting the 3rd Annual Veterans Day Parade in downtown Lemoore at 6 pm. The parade is free to participate in as long as the entrant maintains a patriotic theme. For more information contact Lemoore Parks and Recreation at (559) 924-6767.

The Kings County Veterans Service Office issues Veteran ID cards to honorably discharged veterans. Contact Joe Wright if you would like to receive periodic veteran's information by email. There are many state and federal benefits and programs available to veterans and their dependents. To find out if you are eligible for any of these benefits, visit or call our office. We can and will assist you in completing all required application forms. You can get information on the web from the Kings County Veterans Service Office webpage at www.countyofkings.com/vets.

Joe Wright, retired Navy Master Chief Petty Officer, is the Veterans Service Officer for Kings County. Send your questions to the Veterans Service Office, 1400 W. Lacey Blvd, Hanford, CA 93230; call 582-3211, ext. 2669; or e-mail joe.wright@co.kings.ca.us.

Self-Help Enterprises workers install solar panels onto the Vasquez home in Tulare. Courtesy/Self-Help Enterprises.

Self-Help Enterprises Brings Solar Power to Tulare Families

Staff Reports

Through a partnership between NeighborWorks America, a national nonprofit that creates opportunities for people to live in affordable homes, improve their lives and strengthen their communities, and GRID Alternatives, Self-Help Enterprises received a $15,000 grant to provide rooftop solar to 12 Self-Help homes in the community of Gail Estates in Tulare.

This partnership increases the support of low-income communities by giving them access to greener, more efficient power and lowering the utility costs for individuals and families.

The12 homes were constructed under Self-Help Enterprises' mutual self-help housing program by low-income families at or below 80% of the area median income. Through the program, families provide more than 70% of the construction labor. These labor hours, or "sweat equity", are used as the down payment on their new home.

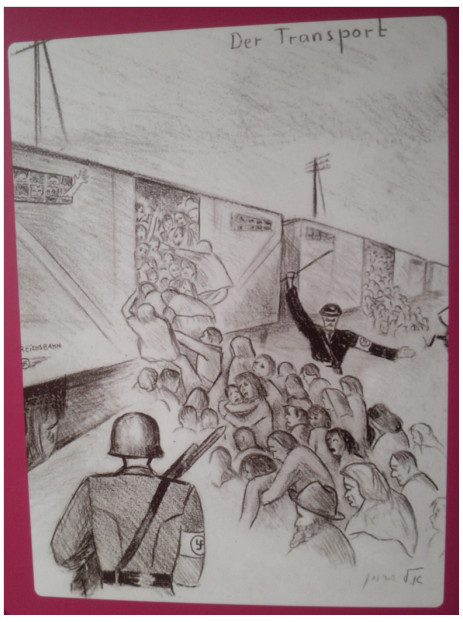
During the past several years, Self-Help Enterprises has worked closely with GRID Alternatives to provide rooftop solar to more than 100 Self-Help homebuilders in the San Joaquin Valley.

Remembering Kristallnacht

Staff Reports

The terror of the Holocaust seen through the eyes of the children will be brought to life during Remembering Kristallnacht (Night of Broken Glass) on Friday, November 6 at Congregation Beit Shalom in Visalia. The evening commemorates the November 9-10, 1938 pogrom when Germans burned synagogues and broke the windows of businesses. It was a night of persecution that began the Holocaust.

As Jewish children during the Holocaust in Europe, Bob Geminder and Gabriella Karin escaped capture and death many times before the Nazis were overthrown in 1945. Geminder and Karin now live in Los Angeles where they regularly speak as part of the L.A. Museum of the Holocaust. They will tell their stories at 7 pm.



The Transport - Packed like sardines into cattle cars, Jews from all over Europe were sent to their deaths.

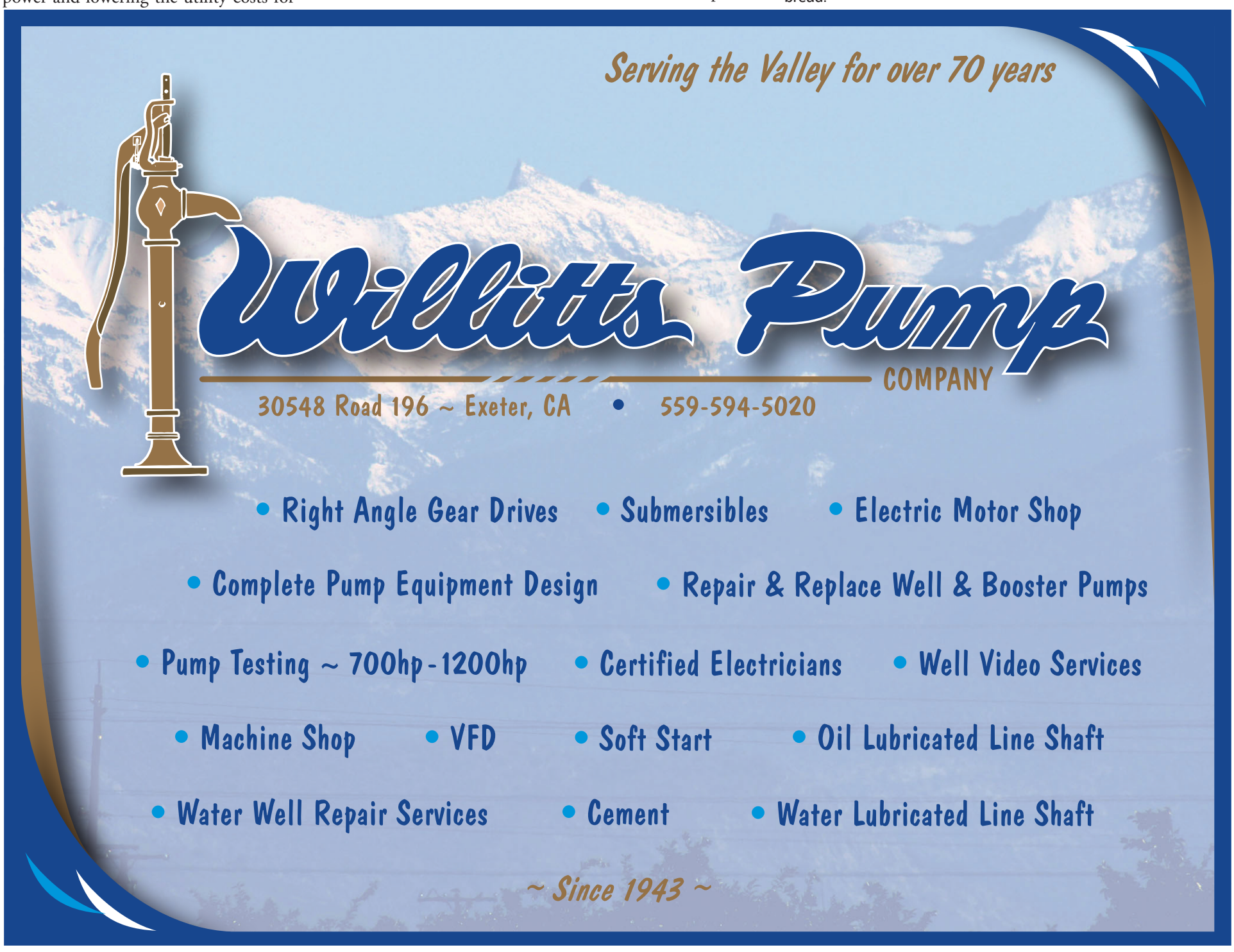
The Enemy - The S.S. officer shouted, "You wanted this war." We looked at him, not understanding. A 6-year-old kid got out of line and said, "No, uncle S.S.-man. We don't want the war. We want a piece of bread."

Starting at 6 pm, children's artwork from the Holocaust will be on display.

"From the Children, About the Children, For the Children: Art of the Holocaust" contains 13 panels of children's art drawn by children terrorized during the Holocaust. Each panel tells a chilling story with themes such as Hunger, Humiliation, Starvation, Fear and Captivity, and contains three or four pictures that survived the mass exterminations—although many of the children did not.

The art collection is on loan from the Holocaust Center for Humanity in Cincinnati, Ohio through November 8.

Congregation Beit Shalom is located at 3339 S. Court in Visalia (at Paseo Street, north of Caldwell). The event is free and open to the public. Information: 308-1333.



Valley Voice
Valley Scene
5 November, 2015

Symphony Performs Beethoven and Prokofiev

Donna Orosco

The Tulare County Symphony is pulling out two beautiful, but less well-known, compositions by two musical giants of the 19th and 20th centuries for its concert at 7:30pm on Saturday, November 21 at the Visalia Fox Theatre. And they're bringing back a favorite, violinist Danielle Belen, as well.

Violin Concerto

Belen will perform Prokofiev's "Violin Concerto No. 2" which starts off with a simple violin melody related to traditional Russian folk music. The composer was born into a family of agriculturalists. Village life, with its peasant songs, left a permanent imprint on him.

Prokofiev, who was born in Russia and lived in the United States and various other countries, was quoted as saying, "The number of places in which I wrote the concerto shows the kind of nomadic concert-tour life I led then. The main theme of the 1st movement was written in Paris, the first theme of the 2nd movement at Voronezh [Russia], the orchestration was finished in Baku [Azerbaijan] and the premiere was given in Madrid."

Prokofiev breathed new life into the symphony, sonata and concerto, emerging as one of the truly original musical voices of the 20th Century.

Violinist Belen, who is the founder of Center Stage Strings summer camp in Three Rivers for string protégés, has appeared as a soloist with major symphonies across the U.S. She is especially happy to perform this concerto. She became enamored with the piece as a teenager but has never played it.

"The second movement is one of my favorite melodies of all times," she said. "A friend and I both said we would have it played at our weddings. I walked down the aisle to it."

Beethoven

The concert concludes with Beethoven's "Symphony No. 4." Beethoven's Fourth is probably the least known and performed of his nine symphonies. It is frequently overshadowed by his more dynamic Third (which the Symphony played last season) and Fifth symphonies.

However, the freshness and spontaneity of the themes, the lack of tragic motives and the perfection of the form triggered the enthusiasm of his contemporaries. In general the symphony, which premiered in 1807, is sunny and cheerful, with light instrumentation in a manner that recalls the symphonies of Joseph Haydn, with whom Beethoven had studied a decade before. Robert Schumann described the piece as the "most romantic" of all Beethoven's symphonies.

Tickets are $30 to $39.50 at the symphony office, 208 W. Main Street, Suite D, Visalia, downstairs in Montgomery Square. Student prices are $10. Tickets are also available at 732-8600 or go to www.tularecountysymphony.com.

The concert begins at 7:30pm, but the audience is invited to attend the pre-concert preview by music director Bruce Kiesling at 6:45pm.

Danielle Belen.

Left: Jana Botkin, "Aspens" Right: Sharon Banister, "Cactus"

"Hidden in the Leaves" Art Show Unearths Rich Artistry in Three Rivers

Karen Kimball

Sixteen artists of the Arts Alliance of Three Rivers explored the theme, "Hidden in the Leaves." As it turns out, leaves of all kinds shelter flora, fauna and humankind in brilliant and innovative forms. The resulting art show runs through January 3 at Sierra Subs and Salads (dining area) in Three Rivers. Artist receptions will be held on Saturdays, November 7, December 5 and January 3.

Inspired by the deep sea, Marn Reich created a fascinating clay plaque depicting a fish swimming gently among seaweed leaves. Contrast that with Sharon Banister's illustration of the beauty hidden in the prickly leaves of the resilient cactus. About her thorny subject, Banister says, "This cactus seems to be lazily producing its fruit posing no danger to anyone, yet it also has thorns."

Three artists, using different media, look from the leaves to the night sky for inspiration. Christine Sell-Porter's oil painting, "Full Moon-Cold Night", takes us to a brilliant, warming campfire offering comfort, safety and warmth in the cold Sierra night air. Shirley Keller's ceramic wall hanging "Owl Hidden in the Leaves" reminds us of the wise, night hunting owl. Keller's visit to a quilt show where she saw a "quilt of almost cartoonish owls", influenced her playful rendition of the owl.

Richard Root Woods found surprising emotion hidden within lettuce leaves flung by two chefs "expressing their passion for culinary perfection." "Two Cooks in the Kitchen" is an innovative metal print of an original acrylic and watercolor painting. "Naked Ladies in Bloom", a watercolor by Mona Fox Selph, paints the passion of their once a year bloom on a single stalk, only to fade and be overtaken by their prolific leaves.

If you enjoy landscapes, Jana Botkin, Mona Fox Selph, Clancy Barlow, Grace Harvey, Chris Schlossin and Christine Sell-Porter deliver. Their works in oil, pastel, watercolor and photography capture nature in all the seasons. Schlossin's "To Be Apart" is a stunning visual of a single blooming redbud tree among abundant spring leaves of oaks. Botkin's exquisite gold aspens, painted in Mineral King scream "Fall!" Harvey takes us on a walk down a country road rich with wild golds and oranges among the fading greens.

A taste for the exotic influenced clay

LEAVES continued on **23 »**

ImagineU Children's Museum Opens Doors to New Facility Next Week

Staff Reports

After years of planning, the vibrant new ImagineU Children's Museum opened its doors on November 2, and began welcoming children throughout the Central Valley. Located on the corner of Tipton and Oak Streets in Visalia, children will discover, grow and be inspired like never before.

As the only children's museum of its kind in the San Joaquin Valley, ImagineU's new 15,000 sq. ft. facility includes eight major interactive exhibits, along with many smaller exhibits that provide hands-on learning through science, environmental conservation, and art. The exhibits include Grove Pick & Pack, Imagination Station, and U-Fix-It Garage to name a few. The new facility also provides educational programs, an outdoor pavilion, as well as a café and gift shop.

"It seems almost surreal that our dream and vision has come to life and we will finally get to share it, and inspire young minds of the Central Valley," said Cheryl Christman, Executive Director of the museum. "We have been planning and contributing to each and every detail along the way, to insure the new ImagineU is something our community can be proud of. It is better than anything we ever imagined and we are truly grateful by the amount of support we have received."

Designed around the concept that learning through play is an effective tool for children and adults alike, ImagineU provides a safe educational outlet for children in the community. It's also a great place to have private birthday parties and special events. Parties at ImagineU can be booked seven days a week and regular hours of operation are Monday through Friday, 10am to 5:30pm and Saturday and Sunday, noon to 4pm.

For more details visit ImagineUMuseum.org or call 559-733-5975.

Eight major interactive exhibits will be part of ImagineU's 15,000 sqft. facility.

Barmageddon Grand Opening Nov. 27

Tulare County's newest spot to kick up your feet and drink a few cold ones isn't exactly the same old story you might be used to.

While there is already a varied selection of your classic "Bar and Venue" type getaways to choose from, the folks over at Tulare's Barmageddon: Venue & Barcade have been hard at work on their unique twist on the bar scene.

Arcade cabinets. Pool tables. Air hockey. These are just a few of the usual things you will find at Barmageddon that make many an arcade complete. What sets this new and exciting barcade apart from all the others is its extremely inviting bar-top console station, as yet sporting seven consoles routed to several televisions (as well as a state of the art 1080p projector), including oldies such as Super Nintendo, and even the latest generation consoles with hundreds of games to chose from.

Gaming not your forte? There is still plenty to see and do at this underground venue. With a stage and PA built by musicians for musicians, and an ambiance established by working comedians, this Barcade has been making the calls and the effort to have some of California's best talent stroll through and do their thing. Special events such as Trivia Thunderdome Tuesdays and Tulareous Open Mic every Sunday have already kicked off, and many more are sure to develop as competition down at the Barcade gets more and more heated.

If cold beer, gaming, music and comedy sounds like your kind of gig, come grab a seat and enjoy the future of night life at Barmageddon: Venue & Barcade located at 126 E. Kern Avenue in Tulare.

For a very special night of all of the above plus a whole lot more, make sure and make it down for the Grand Opening celebration on Black Friday, November 27.

The Producers Opens in Lindsay

The Lindsay Community Theatre rendition of *The Producers* opens Friday evening, November 13.

The Producers is directed by Richard Boyd; assisted by Jim Kliegl. Linda Jarrett is choreographer with Lauren Fonseca assisting. Ayla Draper provides the music and Colleen Fleming is the costume designer.

The Producers is the story of a Broadway producer, Max Bialystock (Jim Kliegl) who has experienced several recent flops, his latest being a musical version of Hamlet called "Funny Boy." In the opening scene everyone is complaining about the show: The Usherettes (Victoria Loeffler, Bree Cruser, Linda Jarrett), the First Nighters (Steve Boles, Dennis Meddars, Glen Lilly, Angelica Benitez, Karina Gonzalez, Jacinda Manriquez), the Workman (Andrew Phipps), the Bag Lady (Jaymee Canas), the Nuns

PRODUCERS continued on **24 »**

A Festival of Trees in Three Rivers

Darlene Mayfield

St Anthony's Retreat and Santa Teresita Youth Conference Center is Hosting a Fundraising event that will benefit many local Three Rivers Non-Profits, Schools and Churches here in the Central Valley. The inaugural "Festival of Trees" will be held at St Anthony's, Thursday November 19, 2015 at 6pm.

St Anthony's Retreat is located in Three Rivers and nestled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada's, just a short drive up Hwy 198 from Visalia.

These Small 3-5 foot beautifully adorned trees will go up for Auction beginning at 7 pm; each individual tree will be decorated with just that perfect theme that tells the story of the spirit of giving.

A silent Auction opens at 6pm and will also be displaying many beautiful and handmade items just perfect for that special gift.

All proceeds benefit each individual nonprofit from tree sales and Auction items. All purchases for trees and items are cash or check only. All trees must be taken home the night of the auction.

Enjoy Wine tasting from local wineries, tasty Hors d'oeuvres from the Chefs at The Retreat Center, and a no-host cocktail bar from 6-9pm.

We also will be having 3 celebrity Judges that will be judging the trees in four categories: Best of Show, Best use of Theme, Most Creative and the Judges Award. The judges, all representatives of the art world in the Central Valley are: Jana Botkin, MJ Estes, Wendi MCKellar and Nadi Spencer.

Those non profits decorating a live auction tree or an item for the silent auction or both are the following: The Three Rivers Women's Cub, who is celebrating their 100th Anniversary this year, The Emergency Aid Alliance a local nonprofit that supports families in need, The Three Rivers Lions Club, Three Rives School Foundation, The Bethlehem Center, Riata Ranch International, Embrace Central California, Love, Inc., The Sequoia Parks Conservancy, and many, many more.

For a complete list of the non profits that are showcasing trees and auction items visit out our website at www.stanthonyretreat.org .

Tickets are $25 per person and include a commemorative wine glass. Tickets can be purchased by calling 559-561-4595 or at the Retreat Center. Also ask us about our stay with us Package which includes a night stay for two complete with breakfast the next morning at an additional cost of $80.

As yearend giving is upon us, please take this opportunity to support your favorite non-profit, and enjoy the Season of giving in the foothills of the Central

Education

Great Conversations

Knowing Thyself: The Case of Joseph Conrad

Joseph R. Teller

Know thyself—thus commanded the oracle at Delphi. This deceptively simple precept informs much of Western philosophy, and remains a central goal of modern life. Think of how often we have heard "be true to yourself," and how often "authenticity" is invoked as a chief aspect of our social and mental well-being. But can we ever really "know" ourselves? Are we in fact capable of a self-awareness or self-knowledge from which no part of ourselves can hide? Or is there always something within us—perhaps something we'd rather not know or face—that eludes our grasp?

In "The Secret Sharer," Joseph Conrad examines these probing psychological questions. Conrad's story concerns a sea captain who recalls his experience during his first command. The young captain has been in command only two weeks: "[W]hat I felt most," he says, "was my being a stranger on the ship; and if the truth must be told, I was somewhat of a stranger to myself." The captain also fears he may not "turn out faithful to that ideal conception of one's own personality every man sets up for himself secretly."

While on watch alone one night, the captain finds a man clinging to the ship's ladder. The man is naked, and he emerges from the sea in a surreal moment of modernist fiction: "I saw revealed to my stare a pair of feet, the long legs, a broad livid back immersed right up to the neck in a greenish cadaverous glow." Strangely, the captain does not alert the crew, but instead clothes the stranger and secretly harbors him in his own quarters. This mysterious stranger, named Leggatt, has escaped a nearby ship, where several weeks ago he killed a man in a fit of rage during a storm.

The captain identifies with Leggatt, calling him "my second self." The two men share an intimate secret relationship, and we experience the captain's sense of duality as he tries to hide his second self from his men while simultaneously putting on a public face as the new young captain. But this cannot last.

The captain ultimately engineers a daring maneuver which allows Leggatt to escape the ship as well as maritime law: he orders the ship to sail extremely close to land during the night, telling the crew that this will allow them to catch a land breeze and gain speed. Everything rides on this gamble, including the crew's safety, their trust in their new captain, and the life of the captain's "secret sharer."

Leggatt vanishes into the sea, bound for the island; the captain orders the helm hard over just in time to avoid disaster, and the men all cheer him for his brash courage. The story ends with the narrator reflecting on Leggatt's freedom, calling him "a proud swimmer striking out for a new destiny."

One cannot escape the insistent symbolism: does Leggatt represent some deeper and troubling aspect of the narrator's own psyche? Does he symbolize a kind of base instinct or violent passion that must be expunged from our consciousness if there is to be social order? And if so, is such an exile unequivocally a good thing? Does "knowing thyself"—if in fact we can ever achieve such a thing—sometimes mean having to renounce some part of that self for the sake of others?

COS STEM Leaders Connect with Silicon Valley

A select group of four College of the Sequoias students honed their leadership skills at a special invitation-only conference for math-based majors in the country's science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) innovation hub.

The 12th Annual Mathematics, Engineering, Science Achievement (MESA) Student Leadership Conference was fully sponsored by industry donations. Edison International is the lead sponsor with additional funding from AT&T, Pacific Gas and Electric, San Diego Gas and Electric and Southern California Gas.

The conference, themed "Celebrating 45 Years of STEM Success," was during October. It offered students extensive professional and leadership development through direct interaction with industry mentors and speakers. The hand-picked MESA students, all science, engineering, or math majors, represent 38 universities and community colleges from across the state.

The Sequoias conference attendees were Dieddra Atondo, David Berlin, Isabel Lambert and Vylen Jake Valdez. They were sponsored by PG&E.

Students participated in mock interviews, connected with industry representatives, heard guest speakers and attended workshops. This focus on so-called "soft skills" is a key to shaping well-rounded STEM professionals. Actor and scientist Christina Ochoa and Pixar also gave presentations.

The S D. Bechtel, Jr. Foundation was named the 2015 MESA Champion for the company's long history of support of the program. Bechtel has early and close-knit roots with MESA; Bechtel chairman Stephen D. Bechtel, Jr. was a staunch advocate in pushing internal support with his organization and recruiting other companies to support MESA in the mid 1970s.

Aneita Gage, technical training engineer at Intel Corporation, is this year's MESA Distinguished Alumnus. She participated in MESA while in high school and credits the program with being the driving force behind her desire to be an engineer.

"We know that California's economy needs more STEM workers to stay competitive," said MESA Executive Director Oscar F. Porter. "These students provide the solution to industry's need for well-trained professionals.

"They were selected to attend the conference because these students have strong leadership skills. This event gives them a chance to interact extensively with STEM professionals currently working in industry," said Porter.

MESA promotes STEM success for more than 28,000 educationally disadvantaged secondary, community college and four-year college students in California so they can graduate from college with math-based degrees. Seventy percent of MESA high school graduates statewide went directly to college after graduation. Sixty percent of MESA students go on to math, science or engineering majors. Ninety-seven percent of MESA community college transfer students go to college as STEM majors.

West Hills College Coalinga Farm of the Future to Host FFA Field Day on Nov. 21

West Hills College Coalinga's Farm of the Future will host a Future Farmers of America (FFA) field day on Nov. 21, featuring four different competitions.

Over 100 students from schools across the state are expected to attend to compete in the event, which is the fifth field day hosted by WHCC at the Farm of the Future complex.

The field day will include competition in welding, land judging, best informed greenhand, and farm power career development events and allow FFA members to prepare for the upcoming state finals for these contests.

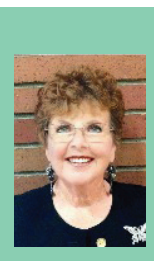
Dr. Timothy Ellsworth, a Farm of the Future instructor and the contest organizer, said field day events are important both as a way to give students the chance to learn about West Hills and also to educate them about agriculture as a possible career path.

"First and foremost, these field days provide formative assessments (students learn as they compete in the competitions) that teach high school students agricultural fundamentals," he said. "They also showcase our facilities, faculty and staff to high school Ag students, and perhaps more importantly, their Ag Instructors who can become some of our best advocates and play an important role in directing graduating seniors to local colleges."

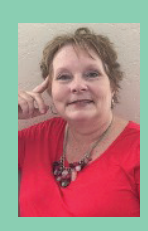
The action will start at 8 a.m. and culminate with the awarding of trophies and ribbons to the winning teams and individuals in each event. Buckles will be awarded to first place individuals and ribbons to first place teams and individuals.

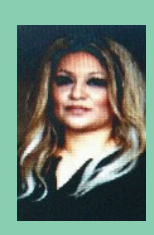
For more information about the contest, contact Ellsworth at 559-934-2711 or timothyellsworth@whccd.edu. Registration for teams interested in attending is open until Nov. 8.

Next deadline:
November 12, 2015


Birdella Tucker

Wanda Widger


Karen Cosio


Tina Jones

John Hayes

With Worship by the Kulow Family

HEALING EXPLOSION
PARTATION SERVICE

Come Receive

Your Word, Your Breakthrough, Your Healing

Friday Night November 13th @ 6:30 pm

Vineyard Christian Fellowship

554 S. Blackstone St.

Tulare, CA

Bring Your Love Offering

Sponsored by: Pearl Box Ministries

Tulare Healing Rooms

Calendar

Mondays: Bridge Club, 9:30am-2pm
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291 Admission is free. For additional information call: Joan Dinwiddie @ 732-0855

Mondays: Knitters, 10am-12:30pm
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291**.** Everyone's welcome.

Fridays: Women's Morning Bible Study, 9am-Noon
210 W Center Street Visalia, CA 93291. For additional information call: 739-9010

1st and 3rd Thursdays: Central Valley Tea Party Meetings, 6pm
819 West Visalia Road, Farmersville.

Through November 30: Express Employment's Pay It Forward Hiring Drive benefitting Visalia Rescue Mission
Give the gift of employment by joining Express Employment Professionals' Pay It Forward Holiday Hiring Drive as they strive to place 100 job seekers in Tulare, Kings & Fresno Counties November 1st-30th. Being out of work during the holidays can be particularly tough, and we would like to make sure as many people as possible earn a paycheck just in time for the holidays. For every new hire through this Hiring Drive, Express will donate $40 to VRM! For more information, please contact: Nathan Jefferson at 559-738-7822.

Through January 3: "Hidden in the Leaves" Arts Exhibition
The Arts Alliance of Three Rivers is excited to present "Hidden in the Leaves" arts exhibition. Uncover autumn's abundance of artistry and imagination at our 2015-2016 Fall-Winter art show. Opening on November 3rd thru January 3rd at 41717 Sierra Drive Three Rivers. Open daily (except Monday) 10am to 5pm. Artist receptions will be held on 1st Saturday, November 7, December 5 and January 2 from 11am to 2:30pm. Sponsors include Arts Alliance of Three Rivers, Sierra Subs and Salads and 1st Saturday of Three Rivers. For additional information call 559 967-8281.

NOVEMBER

November 6: Central Valley Parkinson's Support Group Meeting, 10:30am
Central Valley Parkinson's Support Group will meet in the Pre School Center of Visalia United Methodist Church located at 5200 West Caldwell in Visalia. Nicole Burnham from the D.A.'s Office will present a program on "Fraud and Seniors" Plan to join us for lunch and good conversation after the meeting: www.cvpsg.net or cvparkinsons@gmail.com or 559-280-0301

November 6: Porterville CHAP A Panel of Local Vietnam Veterans 7-8pm
This year marks the 40th anniversary of the official end of the Vietnam War. To commemorate that historic event, a panel of local Vietnam Veterans will discuss some of their personal experiences and recollections regarding their time in the service and how that service affected their lives. Questions from the audience will also be part of the program.

November 6 & 7: 47th Annual Tulare Collectible Show & Sale, 9am-6pm (7th 9am-2pm)
All Kinds if Bottles, Insulators, Antiques, Fishing Gear, Jewelry, Dishware, Jars, Old Tools, Marbles, Toys, and Lots of Table Top Collectibles. At Tulare Veteran's Memorial Building 1771 E. Tulare Avenue in Tulare. Free Admission. Table Cost: $40, $70, $95 & $115 for 4. For more information call Bob Merzoian 559-781-6319.

November 7: American Cancer Society "BARK FOR LIFE" event at Exeter Bark Park 9am-Noon
The 3rd annual Bark for Life of Exeter will take place at the Exeter Bark Park, F Street and Palm. This noncompetitive walk will bring together dog lovers from throughout Tulare County to celebrate the care giving qualities of our canine "Best Friends." There will be music, exhibits, raffles, contests, prizes and fun. Funds raised by the Bark for Life of Exeter will be used to provide services for local cancer patients, community education programs and national research projects to find cures.

November 7: Rummage Sale Fundraiser for Visalia Feral Cat Coalition, 7am-1pm
In the parking lot at 5229 W. Walnut Avenue in Visalia. For more information call 559-429-5415. Check out our website-www.visaliaferalcatcoalition.org

November 7: The Rib Cook-off, 12:00pm
The Annual Rib Cook-off is held on the First Saturday of November. Sponsored by Que'n For Kids, the 5th Annual Lindsay Rib Cook Off features Bloodline and DJ Noe. Over $3500 in prizes, a beer garden and something for the whole family. For information, call Sarah at 756-3464 or Lionel 359-1739.

November7: TCFB Young Farmers & Ranchers To Hold Annual Casino Night Fundraiser, 6pm
The Tulare County Farm Bureau Young Farmers and Ranchers (YF&R) Committee will hold their 22nd annual Casino Night fundraiser on November 7, 2015 beginning at 6:00 pm at the International Agri-Center Dairy Pavilion. Casino Night is the sole fundraiser of the Young Farmers and Ranchers committee. Proceeds will fund YF&R projects in Tulare County such as youth scholarships, the Farm to Fork program, the Annual Grocery Cart race to benefit Tulare County Foodlink and professional development opportunities for YF&R members. Casino Night is a fun filled evening that features casino gaming tables, a BBQ dinner, and a silent auction. The event also includes a hosted bar of wine and beer, and live entertainment provided by Motel Drive. Casino Night tickets are available at a pre-sale price of $35 per person and may be purchased through any YF&R member or by contacting the Tulare County Farm Bureau office at (559) 732-8301. Tickets will be $40 at the door and credit card processing is not available.

November 9: Porterville CHAP A Panel of Local Vietnam Veterans 11:30am-12:30pm
This year marks the 40th anniversary of the official end of the Vietnam War. To commemorate that historic event, a panel of local Vietnam Veterans will discuss some of their personal experiences and recollections regarding their time in the service and how that service affected their lives. Questions from the audience will also be part of the program.

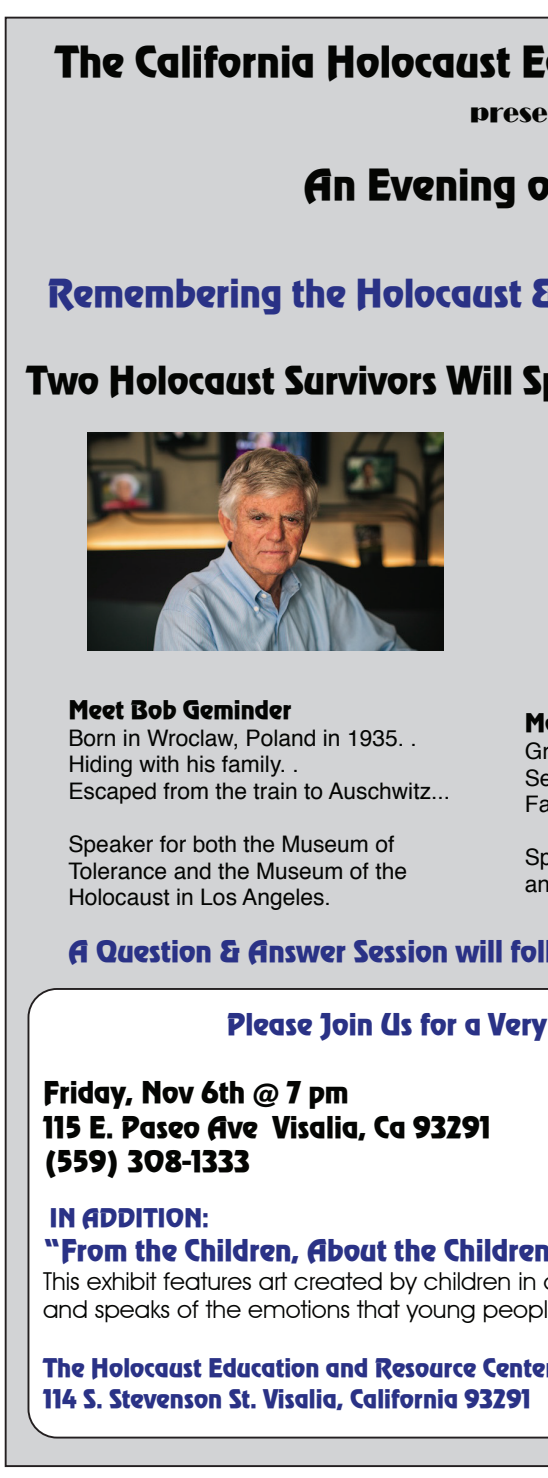
November 9: 14th Annual South Valley Battle Of The Badges, 3:30-6:30pm
Competition Between the Valley's Finest. Donors will receive a commemorative t-shirt and donor reward coupons. Corcoran City Police Department Corcoran Family YMCA (Kate Boswell Center) 900 Dairy Avenue, Corcoran. For more information contact: Gary Cramer (559) 992-5151 or John Harris at (559) 469-7248.

November 9: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: TBA—poetry?

November 11: Veterans Day Run, 7:15am-10am
Porterville Parks & Leisure invites you to join the annual Veterans Day Run. It takes place right before the Veterans Day Parade in Downtown Porterville. The event features a 5K run, 10K run, 5K walk and free kids fun run. Awards will be given to the top three finishers in every division. Pre-registered participants are guaranteed long sleeved commemorative shirt. Runners: $20; Walkers: $15; Veterans/ Active Military: $10. For more information call Amy Graybehl at 559-782-7521.

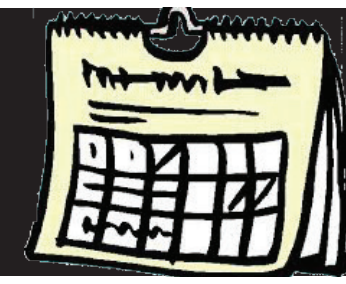
November 11: Way Back Wednesdays--Classic Flicks at the Fox, 7pm
On the second Wednesday monthly through April, 2016, the Visalia Fox Theatre presents a classic film. Admission is $5 and includes a small popcorn. Tonight: Hannah and Her Sisters, 1986.

November 13: Poerterville CHAP "The Future of Libraries in the Information Age" - Presented by Anthony Bernier Ph.D., Associate Professor, School of Information, San Jose State University, 7-8pm
Methods of gathering and disseminating information have changed dramatically in the past few decades, and those changes have impacted the traditional roles of libraries. Dr. Bernier contends that the library is changing focus from institutional goals centered on the book, to more community-based goals centered on the cultural production and experiences of local communities while remaining a key physical space for civic identity. This idea will be explored in his presentation.



November 14: "Just Walk" With a Doc, 8-9am
The Healthy Visalia Committee working in partnership with Kaweah Delta Health Care District, Family HealthCare Network, Tulare County Medical Society and the Visalia Parks and Recreation Dept. continues its 2015 Visalia's "Just Walk" With a Doc walking program. The walks will take place at Blain Park, 3101 S. Court St., in Visalia.

November 14: 30th annual Holiday Bazaar, 9am-4pm
Sponsored by the Three Rivers Senior League, the event is held at the Three



Rivers Memorial Building. Vendor spaces are $25 for outside and $30 for inside. For further information please call Mo Basham 561-4988 or email wildirish-57att.net

November 14: Spirit 88.9's Turkey Toss benefitting Visalia Rescue Mission, 10am-2pm
Visit Visalia Grocery Outlet to drop off frozen turkeys and help us feed our local community throughout the holiday season! Toss a turkey (bean bag) to win CDs, prizes & more! The first 100 turkeys will get special SPIRIT sunglasses!

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f Living History
& Anniversary of Kristallnacht
peak in Visalia Nov. 6th @ 7 pm

eet Gabriella Karin
rew up in Bratislava, Czechoslovakia. . .
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peaker for both the Museum of Tolerance
nd the Museum of the Holocaust in Los Angeles. .

low their historical narratives. . .

Special Event and Evening!

Congregation Beit Shalom
(Corner of Paseo Ave. & Court St.)
Admission Free - Donations Welcome

, For the Children: Art of the Holocaust"
a variety of ghettos and concentration camps,
e experienced as they endured the Holocaust.

r (501C3)
Caholoed@gmail.com (559) 747-2239

November 14: Exeter Gallery Holiday Art Auction, 4:30-8:30pm
This is your chance to come support the gallery fundraiser that provides scholarships to two high school seniors every year. Fine wines, food catered by hometown Emporium, a live and silent auction and live music make for a festive evening. It's also an opportunity to see our current exhibit featuring photographer Gene Price, pencil and oil artist Leslie Fry and artist Manual Abad. Tickets are available at the gallery on Saturdays from 10am-4pm and Sundays 12 to 4pm. They can be purchased that night at the door. The cost is $40 per person which includes all wine and food. If you have anything you would like to donate to the silent auction it would be greatly appreciated and any artist donating a piece of artwork for the live auction will be admitted free to the event. Any questions or donations please call Christie Caldwell 936-3385.

November 14: 9th Annual Salute to Veterans Banquet, 5-8pm
A free dinner provided by Corcoran's Veteran Outreach at the Technology Learning Center (corner of Whitley & Dairy) in Corcoran, honoring all corcoran military veterans and their families, Hosted by the Corcoran High School Air Force JROTC. For more information please contact: Lieutenant Colonel Cardona at 559-992-8888 ext. 6266

November 15: Tulare Historical Museum 30th Anniversary Celebration, Noon-4pm
We will be recognizing individuals and the community whose contributions have sustained the museum for the past thirty years at the Tulare Historical Museum, 444 W. Tulare Avenue in Tulare. Free admission. For more information, call the Tulare Historical Museum 559-686-2074.

November 15: Music At the Main featuring Blake Pouliot, 4pm
The Canadian phenom brings his world renowned Guarneri del Gesù violin to the stage at the Main Street Theater on Sunday, November 15. Tickets are $12 online or at the box office. Children and students of all ages admitted free. The parent accompanying a child also admitted free. For more information, visit www.threeriversperformingarts.org.

November 17: The League of Women Voters of Tulare County Meeting, 11:45am
In Sue Sa's Club House,699 W. Center in Visalia. The continued study of Money in Politics will feature background information. "We in America do not have government by the majority. We have government by the majority who participate" Thomas Jefferson. A fixed-price lunch for $13 including tax and tip will be served. Reservations are required and the public is welcome. Contact Newellgb@hotmail.com or call 732-1251.

November 18: Rock Your Holidays, 9-10:30am
It's that time of year - the hustle and bustle of the holiday season is upon us. There is no better time to reach out to your customers, bring new clients in, and boost repeat and referral business! Whether you have a retail shop, provide a specialized service or work business-to-business, or have a nonprofit in need out outreach, this workshop will provide simple, practical tips for closing out 2015 on a high note. At Fresno Pacific University - Visalia Campus, 245 N. Plaza Drive. For more information, contact the Visalia Chamber of Commerce.

November 19: "A Festival of Trees," 6pm
St Anthony's Retreat and Santa Teresita Youth Conference Center is Hosting a Fundraising event that will benefit many local Three Rivers Non-Profits, Schools and Churches here in the Central Valley. "A Festival of Trees" will be held at St Anthony's, Thursday November 19, 2015 at 6pm. St Anthony's Retreat is located in Three Rivers and nestled in the foothills of the Sierra Nevada's, just a short drive up Hwy 198 from Visalia. These Small but beautifully adorned trees will go up for Auction beginning at 7pm; each individual tree will be decorated with just that perfect theme that tells the story of the spirit of giving. A silent Auction opens at 6pm and will also be displaying many beautiful and handmade items just perfect for that special gift. All proceeds benefit each individual nonprofit from tree sales and Auction items. All purchases for trees and items are cash or check only. Enjoy Wine tasting from local wineries, tasty Hors d'oeuvres from the Chefs at The Retreat Center, and a no-host cocktail bar from 6-9pm. Tickets are $25 per person and include a commemorative wine glass. As yearend giving is upon us, please take this opportunity to support your Favorite non-profit, and enjoy the Season of giving in the foothills of the Central Valley. Visit our website at www.stanthonyretreat.org or call 559-561-4595 for more information or to purchase tickets. Ask us about our "Stay with us package."

November 21: Redwood Boys Basketball Boosters presents Meet the 2015-16 Rangers, 5-7pm
In the Redwood gym. Tickets $20.00. Intra-squad scrimmage/Hors d'oeuvres and soft drinks provided/Dessert/ silent auction. Come meet the current Rangers and re-connect with fellow alumni
RSVP BY NOV. 18TH- cmkmgarner@yahoo.com

November 21: Tulare Kings Hispanic Chamber of Commerce Annual Installation of Officers and Business Awards Dinner, 6pm
At Tachi Palace, the evening will commence with no-host cocktail hour at 6pm. Master of Ceremonies will be Marie Arroyo of Lindsay. Keynote Speaker will be Olivia Calderon. In conjunction with the evening's events the program will recognize local community leaders and businesses that have made a difference in our community.Tickets are $65 per person or $600 for a table of ten. Sponsorships opportunities are available, for additional information call 559-734-6020.

November 23: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: Thorstein Veblen, *The Theory of the Leisure Class*

November 25: Sound N Vision Foundation pre thanksgiving R&B /Soul Party, 7:30-10pm
Featuring Stan Carrizosa, plus Danielle Marie Stacy. At the Cellar Door, 101 West Main Street in Visalia. Tickets $10 (21+) available at Ticketweb.com. Doors 7:30/Show 8pm.

November 27: Barmageddon Grand Opening
Come celebrate the grand opening of Tulare County's newest spot to kick up your feet and drink a few cold ones. If cold beer, gaming, music and comedy sounds like your kind of gig, grab a seat and enjoy the future of night life at the grand opening of Barmageddon: Venue & Barcade located at 126 E. Kern Avenue in Tulare.

November 27: The Nutcracker, 7-9pm
New theater company, Theater Arts Alliance, brings back the magical holiday tradition of The Nutcracker to the Central Valley ? featuring a combination of local talented dancers and a few professionals. Tchaikovsky's Nutcracker Ballet is one of the most famous ballet's the world has even known. Be prepared to be swept away by the beauty and wonder of this holiday, spectacular performance. Three shows planned for Thanksgiving weekend on Friday, November 27 (7pm) and Saturday, November 28 (2pm and 7pm). Tickets are $25 and can be purchased by calling 800.838.3006 or visiting www.360arts.brownpapertickets.com. For more information about TAA productions, or ticket sales, visit www.theaterartsalliance.com.

November 30: Pizza with a Purpose, 5-9pm
Enjoy a great meal & support a great cause! Every #lastmonday of the month in 2015. The Planing Mill will donate a portion of the evening's revenue to the VRM!

DECEMBER

December 5: Lemoore Christmas Parade, 6pm
"The Night Before Christmas in a Galaxy Far, Far Away." Downtown Lemoore, D Street.

December 7: College of the Sequoias Great Books Discussion Group, 4-5:30pm
The group meets second and fourth Mondays monthly in the COS campus' Hospital Rock 133 room in front of the Book Store, just SE of Kern. Tonight's topic: Carl Jung, "The Stages of Life"

December 9: Way Back Wednesdays--Classic Flicks at the Fox, 7pm
On the second Wednesday monthly through April, 2016, the Visalia Fox Theatre presents a classic film. Admission is $5 and includes a small popcorn. Tonight: Gremlins, 1984.

More online: ourvalleyvoice.com

Sports

COS Basketball Gears Up for Another Good Season

Stefan Baros

The College of the Sequoias Men's Basketball team is coming off a season in which the team made it to the second round of the NorCal playoffs. Head Coach Rusty Smith is pleased with the way his team performed and looks to another good year.

Smith said, he believes his team was playing its best basketball going into playoffs and should not be disappointed with the way it ended.

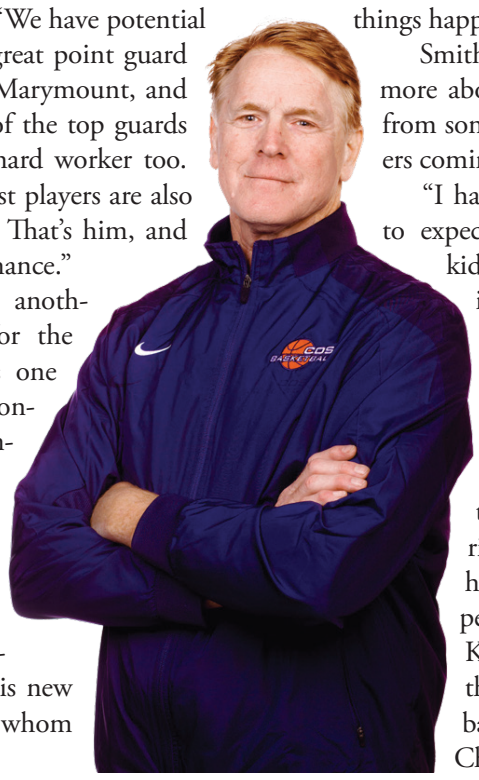
"We won our first round game, and in second round we went up against the number two seed and led the whole game," he said. "Throughout the season though, we did let some games get away. We didn't have the team toughness to win those games."

Coming into this 2015-16 season, the Giants will have to deal with losing their top three scoring sophomores from last season, Chris Ross, Chris Smith and Brantley Bynum. Coach Smith said he doesn't believe that being without those players will add any challenge that is new for a coach. He knows what his new group of players can be capable of accomplishing this season.

"This will be the same challenge as always," he said. It's getting a group of guys to compete and buy into a team concept and what a program is doing."

Coming into this season, Smith says he sees this team as being capable of doing good things with the crop of players they have coming in, "We have potential this year. We have a great point guard transfer from Loyola Marymount, and he's going to be one of the top guards in the north. He's a hard worker too. It helps when your best players are also your hardest workers. That's him, and he'll give the team a chance."

There will be another transfer playing for the Giants this year, this one coming from the National Association of Intercollegiate Athletes level. Kyle Hurt, a Hanford native, who is transferring from Oklahoma Wesleyan, talked about his overall expectations for this new group of players with whom he will be playing.



Rusty Smith

"We have enough talent to make a good run, and should be able to make an impact in conference," he said. "We have other players that'll look to us to help show them the ropes and get them into the flow of games. We have a lot of hard working guys on the team though. We're not too athletic, but we'll be able to make things happen on the floor."

Smith talked a little more about what to expect from some of the new players coming to the team.

"I have an idea of what to expect. We have a big kid from Brazil coming in. He'll be a solid post player. So basically him and our transfer from Loyola Marymount are the two that standout right now. We'll have shooters on the perimeter this year. Kyle will be one of them. Also coming back we have Derek Check who is Mr. Versatility. He does everything for us. Those are the main guys that have stood out in the eight weeks we've been practicing."

With losing his three top scorers from last year's team, Smith will need some production to be filled, and he talked about what exactly this year's team will be missing from last year.

"Last year we were athletic, this year not so athletic, though we do have athletes, so we won't be able to hang our hat on the things we did last year," Smith said. "This year we'll have to play team defense, but I believe our overall athleticism can be exploited. We can do other things that can make up for that though."

As for what Smith believes his team will be better with this season, it comes back to the improved outside shooting for the Giants.

"Perimeter shooting has been better so far from what we've seen so far in intrasquad scrimmages," he said. "Other than that though, I'm not sure yet. We'll be solid though."

The COS Giants will open their season in the Cuesta College tournament vs. Allen Hancock on Friday November 6 at 2pm. The Giants will open up their home portion of the schedule when they host the Mannon/Pepsi/Wyndham tournament vs. Shasta College on Friday December 18 at 8pm.

Two West Hills Lemoore Soccer Players Named to Academic All-State Team

Staff Reports

Bruno Bramati and Ismael Farfan, two members of the WHCL men's soccer team, have been named to the California Community College Athletic Association's Academic All-State Soccer Team.

Recipients of this honor must have a GPA of 3.5 or higher, have earned at least 24 units, and have completed at least one season of soccer. The two players were part of a total of only 11 players who received the designation for 2015.

"I am proud of both of these guys and as a former student athlete I understand just how hard it is to juggle academics and athletics," said WHCL soccer coach Allen Fortune. "Bruno and Ismael are great people and work hard on and off the field. It is wonderful to see them recognized for their exceptional work. They are true examples of what it means to be Golden Eagles."

Brumati, an international student from Brazil, is a defender. He also spent time this summer playing in the Player Development League for the Fresno Fuego soccer team.

Bruno Bramati

Ismael Farfan

Farfan is a sophomore and native of Fresno and is the team's goalkeeper.

Blake Pouliot will play at the Main Street Theater in Visalia on November 15.

Violin Star Blake Pouliot to Perform at Main Street Theater

Bill Haxton

Canadian phenomenon Blake Pouliot brings his world renowned Guarneri del Gesù violin to the stage at the Main Street Theater on Sunday, November 15 at 4pm.

In an era of outstanding young violinists, Mr. Pouliot is a standout. He has won or placed near the top in every violin competition he has entered. Half a minute listening to him and you'll know why.

His fingering and bowing are immaculately precise--the word brilliant comes to mind--and his tone quality is deep, resonant and as emotionally expressive as any you may have heard.

It's no accident that he prefers broad, heartfelt music from the Classical, the Romantic and the Impressionist Eras.

His violin, one of the most coveted concert instruments anywhere, suits his style perfectly.

His Guarneri del Gesù was constructed by the one violin maker in history who now rivals Stradivarius, Bartolomeo Guarneri.

Mr. Pouliot's instrument was made in 1729, just down the road from the Stradivarius studio in Cremona.

Where Stradivarius violins are known for their clear, pure, silvery tones, the Guarneri violins sound darker, sonorous and robust, ideal for the expansive emotions that fill the hall when Mr. Pouliot performs.

The program opens with Mozart's threshold-crossing *Violin Sonata No. 25 in F Major, K. 376*, written in Vienna in 1781 just after Mozart had been unceremoniously dismissed from the court at Salzburg with a literal kick in the hind end. The F Major Sonata is noteworthy for it's balanced dialogue between piano and violin, which at the time was a relatively new development, and for the sheer inventive genius of Mozart in mid-career.

Ravel's Violin *Sonata No. 2 in G Major* follows. Jazz and Blues were making big inroads in Paris at the time and Ravel fell in love with the freedom and expressiveness of these American musical forms.

The techniques and melodies of Jazz and Blues found their way into this composition. The references are not immediately apparent but do emerge noticeably as the piece progresses, especially in the second movement.

Bach's immortal *Partita No. 3 in E Major* opens the second half. By far the most cheerful and exuberant of Bach's six pieces for solo violin, the sheer brilliance of the Prelude is one of those melodies which once heard is never forgotten. In fact, that can be said about each of the movements in this most universally agreeable of all Bach's compositions.

Also on the program are Tchaikovsky's lyrically gorgeous *Waltz Sentimentale* and Hubay's soaring, passionate, sometimes whimsical *Fantasy on Themes from Carmen*.

Mr. Pouliot will remain after the concert to answer questions about the program and about his violin.

For more information, visit www.threeriversperformingarts.org.

Tickets are $12 online or at the box office. Children and students of all ages admitted free. Parents accompanying children also admitted free.

Music at the Main
Sunday, November 15
4 pm
Main Street Theater
307 E. Main Street, Visalia

Art in Downtown Visalia During First Friday

Staff Reports

The last official First Friday art walk of the year will start at the Brandon-Mitchell Gallery in the Center for Spiritual Awareness Center, 117 S. Locust, Visalia (one block south of Main Street).

On Friday, Nov. 6 from 6-8pm, come enjoy the art, sample desserts and snacks made by members of the center, and pick up a map to the other venues.

The center is hosting its annual Members & Friends Show featuring an eclectic mix of paintings, pencil drawings, collages, ceramics, photography, quilts and mixed media.

The Center Band will perform great jazz from 6 -7pm The band is made up of well-known professional musicians Fritz Carney, bass; Mark Shuklian, drums; and Richard Garoogian, piano.

At 7pm, cellist Carole Greening will take the stage, performing everything from folk songs to famous classics, tunes from musicals and a few Beatles favorites.

You can start your holiday shopping from the assortment of crafts, books and CDs on sale in the Center Bookstore.

You'll find candles, jewelry, up-cycled wine bottles turned into incense burners, and serenity scarves. Plus there are a wide variety of books on meditation, spirituality and healing.

Other Venues

First Friday boasts six other venues this month. **Clay Café** invites you to take a stroll through their gardens and romantic Victorian building. You can even start painting your very own ceramic piece of art at the beginning of the night and ride the trolley around to the other stops while your work dries.

Garden Street Studio will have their artists and instructors in action. The studio specializes in mosaics, art journaling and jewelry. Sift through their mountains of supplies for inspiration and sign up for a class with your friends and family.

Arts Visalia presents "Manifestation: New Works in Paper" by Adri Luna. Born and raised in Visalia, Luna received a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the Kansas City Arts Institute.

Since graduation, she has established herself as an emerging artist in the Kansas City art community. She will show a brand new series of pieces: from small, delicate paper sculptures to large-scale paper installations.

The "Best of Taste the Arts" will be on display at The Venue at the Arts Consortium. Check out contest winners from the annual Taste the **Arts Festival** that took place just two weeks ago in Downtown Visalia.

Grace Note Music Studio will offer class samples, studio tours and student concerts on the grass at their location.

A new First Friday venue, **Michael's Jewelry** on Main, features artist Grace Harvey.

Look for the "Art Stop" signs at each venue, and then hop on the Visalia Towne Trolley to visit each site. Event volunteers will be in bright orange shirts.

Leaves

Continued from p. 17

work by Anne and H.J. Brown. In their collaboration, "Species Unknown," a leaf brought to them by neighbors who traveled to VietNam was impressed and cut out. Anne Brown glazed and fired it. Deborah Dal Zuffo also caught the exotic "bug" in her fanciful mixed media painting, "Queen of the Monarchs." In this, monarch butterflies find a verdant home protected by their fairy like queen.

Nikki Crain and Dot Robb bring a detailed sensibility to this profusion of talent. Crain's pencil drawing of "Manzanita Blossom" is one in her series featuring local plants. Dot employed needle and floss on fabric to create her unique Brazilian embroidery of leaves of different colors and textures. Celebrating the beauty of fall, Robb is thankful for the changing of the leaves in the different seasons.

"Hidden in the Leaves", runs through January 3. Daily (except Monday) 10 am to 6pm and Sunday at 10am-5pm at Sierra Subs & Salads, 41717 Sierra Drive, Three Rivers. 1st Saturday artist receptions 11am - 2:30pm. Information: artsalliancethreerivers.org or 561-7718.

Karen Kimball is a member of the Arts Alliance of Three Rivers.

Magical World of Light and Entertainment Coming to Fairgrounds

This holiday season, the Tulare County Fairgrounds will be transformed into a magical world of light and cultural entertainment that will allow attendees to "Travel the World in One Night."

This 32-day event is a Chinese lantern festival and multicultural theme park with vibrant light displays more than seven stories tall in the Global Village, Holiday Fun, Dinosaur Maze and Enchanted Forest theme areas. Circus of Light, with multicultural acts from around the globe, a full carnival with family-friendly rides and games, an international food court and holiday shopping opportunities will also be available.

"Tulare County has never seen anything like this," noted Pamela Fyock, CEO of the Tulare County Fairgrounds. "This event will take over the entire 10 acres of the fairgrounds and turn it into a wonderland of lights, with music, dance and food from around the world, along with a full carnival. This will make the 2015 holiday season memorable for families from throughout the region."

Global Winter Wonderland is now celebrating its fifth year, and has recently completed a return engagement at Cal Expo in Sacramento. In Tulare, Global Winter Wonderland will open to the public on Saturday, November 21, and will be open seven days a week through Sunday, January 3.

Local entertainers are invited to apply to perform. For details on performance opportunities and other information, visit www.globalwonderland.com or call 510-962-8586.

Producers

Continued from p. 18

(Brenda Cervantes, Judy Fleming), the Street Cleaner (Isaac Mehciz), Passers-by (Colleen Fleming, Jovanna Lopez, Ashley Leal, Natalie Gutierrez, Nicole Bagares, Richard Boyd), and even the Blind Violinist (Thierry Cervantes).

When Max's accountant, Leo Bloom (Chris Pinhero), points out that if a producer raised more money than he spent and the show was a flop, he would not have to pay back his investors and could keep the money. Max wants to do just that: find the worst play, the worst director, and the worst actors, raise lots of money, and when the show is a flop, retire to Rio on the profits. Leo is reluctant at first, but when he returns to his office, he realizes what a dead-end job it is, and decides to join Max and be a producer.

Leo and Max read dozens of awful plays and then decide on the worst play they can find, "Springtime for Hitler," written by Frans Liebkind (George Pearce). Then they find the worst director, Roger DeBris (Ron Fleming) who is assisted by Carmen Ghia (Theirry Cervantes), Bryan (Pedro Nava), Kevin (Scott Sloan), Scott (Isaac Mehciz), and Shirley (Colleen Fleming). Then Leo and Max meet Ulla (Lauren Fonseca), who comes for an audition, but stays as their secretary/receptionist.

The chorus girls dress as prisoners for "Prisoners of Love," Max Bialystock's latest hit.

Max raises money for the show by romancing little old ladies (Sylvia Harral and the Crack of Dawn Dancers), who gladly invest in his show in return for "one last fling" with Bialy. After raising $2 million, Leo and Max are able to finance their show, which, much to their dismay, turns out to be a hit. Critics call it "a satirical masterpiece" and "the best new musical of the decade." Max is caught with the "doctored" books and goes to jail, while Leo and Ulla escape to Rio with the $2 million. Leo, because of guilty conscience, returns to testify on Max's behalf at the trial, and they both get thrown in Sing Sing for five years.

While in the penitentiary, they transform the inmates into a theater company and produce the show "Prisoners of Love." The governor, hearing how they have helped "every murderer, rapist, and sex maniac in Sing Sing" to turn his life around, grants them a full pardon, and they take the show to Broadway. In the end Leo and Max become successful producers with a long line of Broadway hits. Happy ending? Of course.

The Producers is coming to the Lindsay stage on Friday, November 13 and 20, Saturday November 14 and 21 at 7:30pm and Sunday, November 15 at 2pm. Tickets are $15 for adults and $10 for students. Tickets are available at lindsaycommunitytheater.com or at the door the night of the performance. The Lindsay Community Theater is located at 190 N. Elmwood, in the heart of downtown Lindsay. There are five restaurants within a block of the theater for those who would like to dine before the show. For more information call 284-2223.